

LoopHole

A dream come true



Burning Man 2023
from Catalunya to Black Rock City

Josep Giribet Torrelles
with David Giribet and Daniel Giribet









“Art is a form of rebellion against the world as it is. The artist is a visionary who creates a new reality.”

Larry Harvey

LoopHole. A dream come true

Burning Man 2023

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Photos	Josep Giribet Torrelles, David Giribet Farré i Daniel Giribet Farré (A few photos are by other authors, quoted on the photo footer)
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Introduction



This is the story of a dream that begins at the end of the 90s, with the arrival of W/W, we started seeing news and images of an event held in a desert of Nevada (USA), where the participants share artistic installations, whimsical vehicles, extravagant clothing and many smiles, and at the end a human-shaped figure is burnt.

In 2015, David was able to go there for the first time, an experience that changed his way of seeing life.

We promised ourselves that one day we would go there together with an art installation. Finally, we have achieved it and this is the story.

Going to Burning Man is not easy for a European. It is far away, it is a complex endeavor and, it costs a lot of money. But it is even more complicated to bring an artistic installation there. Transport and travel, price of tickets (about \$500 per capita), vehicle rental, the cost of participating in a camp, etc.

Even so, we made the bet of presenting ideas to the call that is made every year. We submitted four proposals, well documented: including concept, structure, process, interaction, environmental impact and many other requirements. This process by itself was already an experience.

We certainly knew it was very difficult, the level of the art pieces that participate every year is very high and our chances modest. The surprise came to us when in December 2022 we got an email: one of our pieces, the LoopHole, had been chosen. Wow! We would go to Burning Man! Sincerely, I have to say the second reaction was: can we? It was crazy. We talked, David, Dani and the rest of the family and, we said, yes it is crazy, but maybe we will not have the opportunity again. Let's go!

And so this adventure began, a great effort to make that great dream come true.

But first we want to thank all the people who have supported us and share the experience with them. Also making a selection amongst hundreds of photos, which may not have a great quality (taken with a cell phone) but do give a testimony of the days lived and, the endearing moments shared with so many extraordinary people.

Josep Giribet Torrelles, December 2023



What is Burning Man?

A bit of history

Burning Man (or BM) (from English, Burning Man) is an event focused on community, art, self-expression and self-reliance that is held annually in the west of the United States of America.

The name of the event comes from its culminating ceremony: the symbolic burning of a large wooden effigy, called "The Man", which occurs on the penultimate night of Burning Man, which is Saturday night before Labor Day.

The event has been held since 1991 in Black Rock City, in northwest Nevada, a temporary city erected in the Black Rock desert about 100 miles north-northeast of Reno. As the co-founder of Burning Man Larry Harvey pointed out in 2004, the event is guided by ten principles: radical inclusion, gifting, decommodification, radical self-reliance, radical self-expression, communal effort, civic responsibility, leaving no trace, participation, and immediacy.

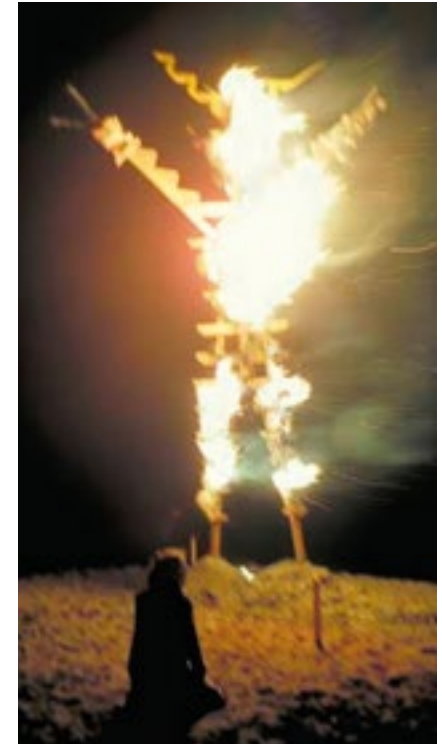
The event was born on June 22, 1986, at Baker Beach in San Francisco, as a small function organized by Larry Harvey and Jerry James, the builders of the first Home. Since then it has been held annually, spanning the nine days prior to and including Labor Day. Throughout the history of the event, attendance has increased. In 2019, 78,850 people participated in the event. In 2021 (the year of the Covid pandemic) the unofficial event had about 20,000 attendees.

The mission of the Burning Man project is to produce the annual event known as Burning Man and to guide, nurture and protect a community created by each individual with their creative powers, to participate in the larger community that forms beyond society, in the world of nature that exists beyond the city.

In its philosophy it is expressed that: "We believe that the Burning Man experience can produce a positive spiritual change in the world. For this, it is equally important that we communicate with each other, with the citizens of Black Rock City and with the outside world in a way that reflects the values expressed by the Burning Man culture. The benchmark of our culture is immediacy: the experience cannot be mediated by ideologies, dogmas, beliefs or experts. We do not need to interpret the experience for you; we only present you the facts of its existence and let you decide".

https://ca.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burning_Man

Burning Man 1987. Baker Beach (San Francisco),
Population 80
Photo: Stewart Harvey



The Man at Black Rock Desert, 1990.
Population 800
Photo: C. Nick Lynch





Larry Harvey was born on January 11, 1948 in San Francisco, California, United States. He was the co-founder and artistic director of Burning Man. He died on April 28, 2018.

Harvey saw Burning Man as a movement to restore community and creative expression in an era of homogenized mass culture and social anomie.

He was influenced by works such as *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* by Lewis Hyde, and argued that the purpose of exchange had to be to form connection and foster creativity instead of a simple transfer of goods.

He wrote the ten principles of Burning Man as an ethical guide for the event and its culture. These principles are: radical inclusion, gifting, decommodification, radical self-expression, radical self-reliance, radical responsibility, communal effort, civic participation, leaving no trace and immediacy.

Harvey believed that the experience of Burning Man could produce a positive spiritual change in the world, and that it was important to communicate with the citizens of Black Rock City and the outside world in a way that reflected

the values expressed by the Burning Man culture.

Harvey understood that all real communities are born from a shared confrontation with survival, and that the Burning Man created a sense of community among its participants, who had to face the extreme conditions of the desert and cooperate to build a self-sufficient ephemeral city.

So he created a social context based on a few simple rules after observing how it works best in reality.

Here are some of his thoughts:

"We don't create the culture, they do, but we create the social container to help contain this creative, interactive and completely uncontrollable process that simply happens in human populations when people are able to relate to each other during any period of time."

So we created a social context, we created a few simple rules after observing how it works best in reality."

"If all your worth and self-esteem is invested in how much you consume, how many 'likes' you receive, or other quantifiable measures, the desire to simply own things exceeds our ability or ability to make moral connections with the people around us."

"People give because they identify with Burning Man, with our city, with our civic life. The idea of giving something to the citizens of Black Rock City has enormous appeal to them because it enhances their sense of who they are and magnifies their sense of being. This is a spiritual reward."

"We say that we are not a sect, that we do not try to brainwash you. Or maybe we are a self-serving sect. You are responsible for your own brainwashing. It has the kind of religious intensity that people mistake for sectarian. But that depends on people's own sense of their own agency. He is not going to be hypnotized by any kind of dogma, or any kind of propaganda."

"Well, it seems to me that all real communities are born from a shared confrontation with survival. Communities are not born out of sentiment or simple good will. They grow from a shared struggle. Our situation in the desert is an incubator of community."

Source: The New Yorker

Plan of Black Rock City 2023

The entire city is surrounded by a 1.5 meter high net in the shape of a pentagon. Its function is to collect small items (paper, plastics) that the wind can carry away.

The arc shape where the fields and tents and vehicles of the participants are located is organized in time zones of an imaginary 12 o'clock clock, starting on the right at 2:00 and turning towards 3:00, 6:00 at the bottom, and ends at 10:00. Every 30' there is a radial street, in the outermost parts also at the quarters. The concentric circles mark the streets named after a letter (A, B, C, D...).

At 6-A are the central services, where there is also a large marquee where all kinds of activities are held (concerts, conferences, debates...). We can also see 9 circular squares at different intersections of central streets.

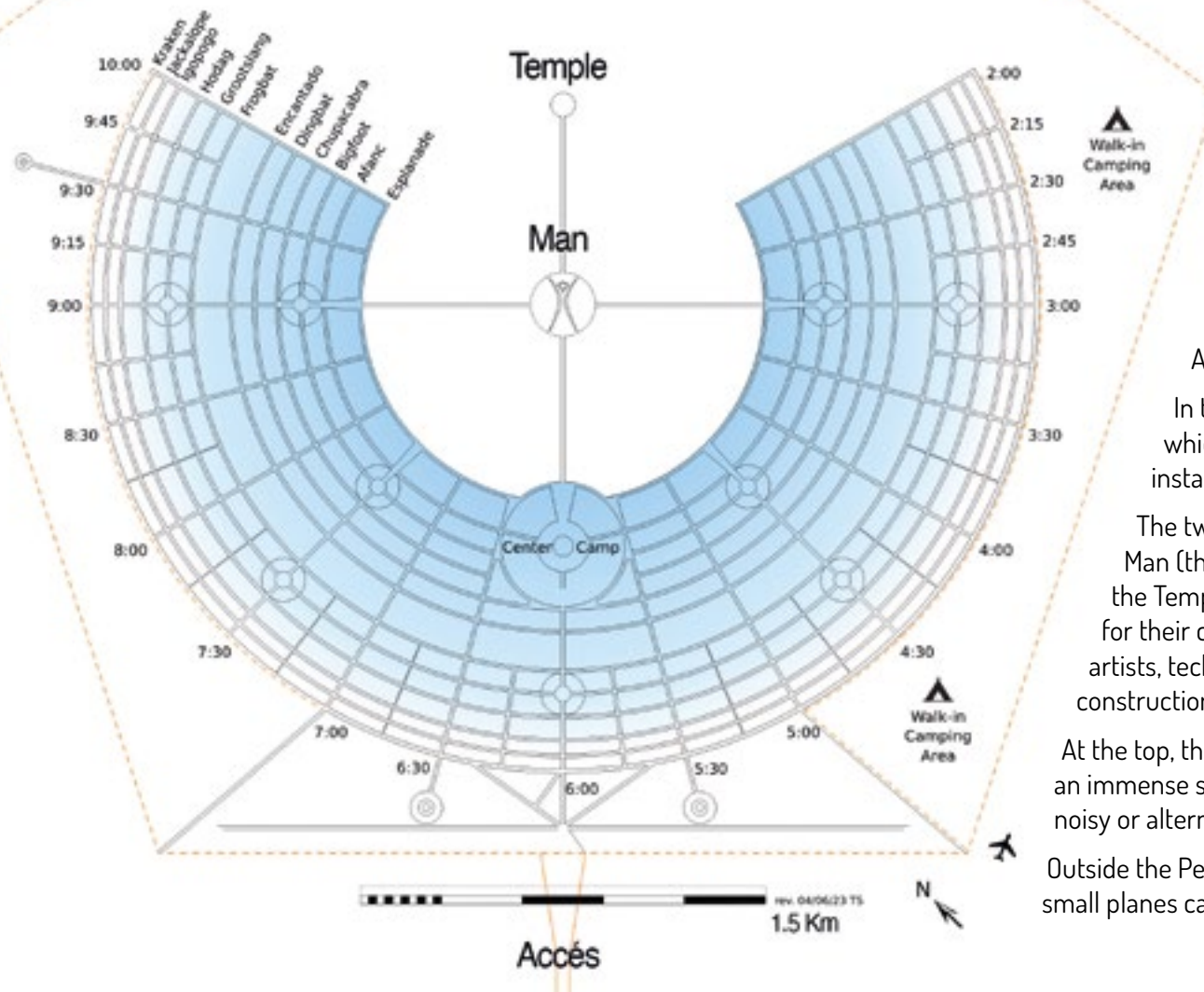
Access is at the bottom, at 6:00.

In the central part the large space called 'Playa' which is where we will find most of the art installations.

The two central elements are also on the Playa, the Man (the human figure, emblem of the event) and the Temple. Every year an ideas competition is called for their concept and design. For a month, a group of artists, technicians and volunteers will take care of their construction.

At the top, the furthest part of the whole complex, we find an immense space called 'Deep Playa' where more radical, noisy or alternative (yet) installations will be located.

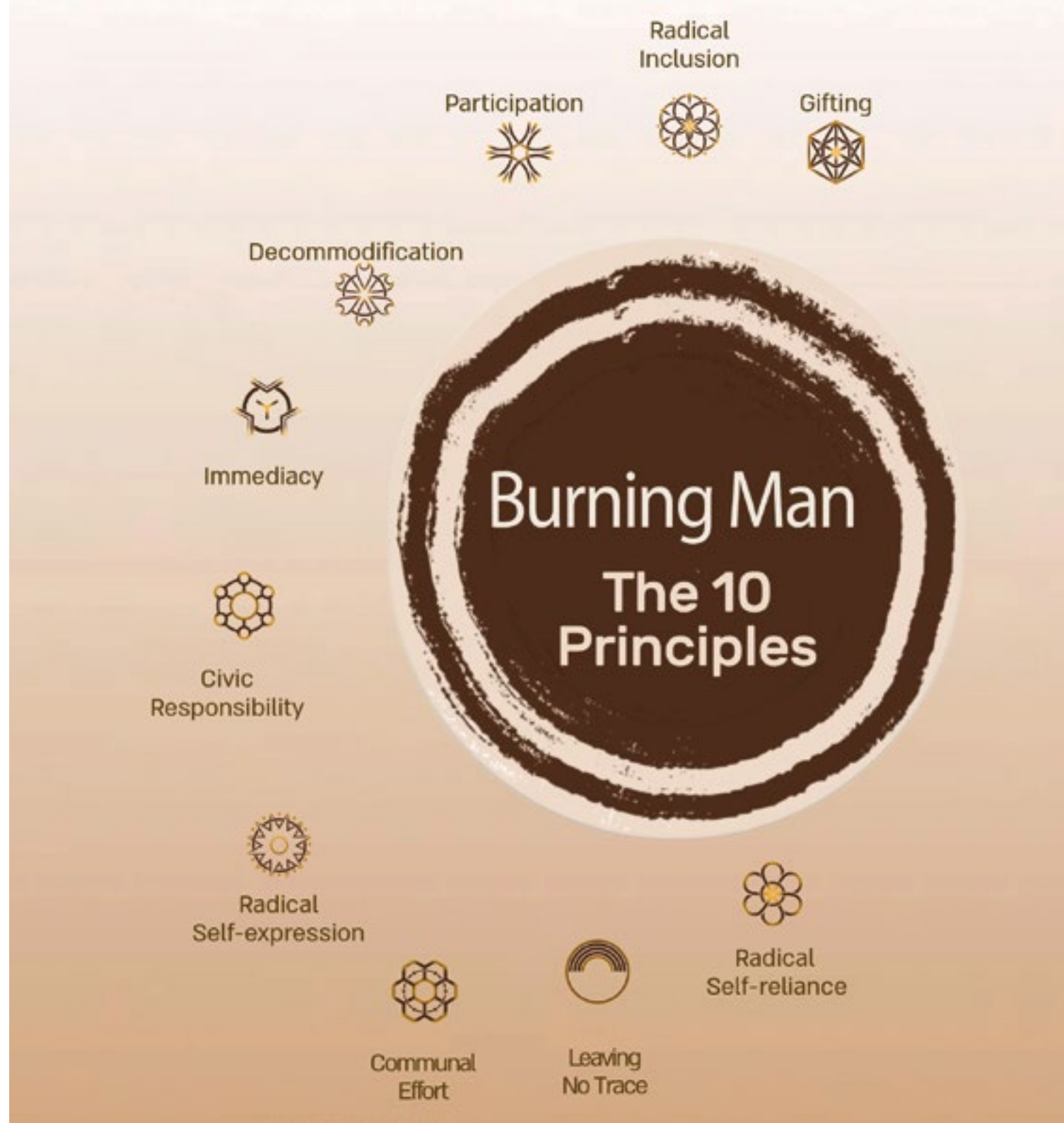
Outside the Pentagon, on the lower right, is the airport, where small planes can land.



The 10 principles



burningman.org/about/10-principles



The **10 principles of Burning Man** are values that reflect the spirit and culture of this event that is held every year in the Nevada desert, in the United States. They were defined by Larry Harvey, one of the founders of the WB in 2004. The principles are as follows:

1. **Radical inclusion:** Anyone can be part of Burning Man. The stranger is welcomed and respected. There are no prerequisites to participate in this community.
2. **Gifting:** Burning Man is dedicated to acts of giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Giving does not mean expecting a return or an exchange for something of equal value.
3. **Decommodification:** To preserve the spirit of giving, the community seeks to create social environments that are not mediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions or advertising. The exploitation of culture for economic interests is resisted.
4. **Radical self-sufficiency:** Burning Man encourages the individual to discover, exercise and rely on their internal resources. It is believed that transformative change, both in the individual and in society, can only occur through deep participation.
5. **Radical self-expression:** Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of the individual. No one but the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content. It is offered as a gift to others. In this spirit, the donor must respect the rights and freedoms of the recipient.
6. **Communal effort:** The community values creative cooperation and collaboration. It is about producing, promoting and protecting social networks, public spaces, works of art and methods of communication that favor interaction.
7. **Civic responsibility:** Civil society is valued. Community members who organize events must take responsibility for public welfare and try to communicate civic responsibilities to participants. They must also assume responsibility for conducting events in accordance with local, state and federal laws.
8. **Leave no trace:** The community respects the environment. He undertakes to leave no physical trace of his activities wherever he meets. She cleans up after herself and strives, whenever possible, to leave places in a better state than she found them.
9. **Participation:** The community is committed to an ethic of radical participation. The world becomes real through actions that open one's heart.
10. **Immediacy:** The immediate experience is, in many ways, the most important touch of value in our culture. It is about overcoming the barriers that separate us from the recognition of our inner being, from the reality of those around us, from participation in society and contact with a natural world that surpasses human powers.

In recent years, an 11th principle has been proposed, **Consent**

Consent is a principle that many event participants have proposed and practiced, but which has not yet been officially recognized by the Burning Man organization. Consent is defined as “mutual respect and explicit agreement for any physical, sexual, or emotional interaction.” Its advocates argue that consent is essential to the safety, well-being and freedom of all members of the community, and that it aligns with the other 10 principles of Burning Man. However, consent also raises some challenges and controversies, such as how to ask for it, how to give it, how to withdraw it, and how to handle situations where there is no consent. For this reason, some participants have created campaigns, workshops, resources and spaces to educate, raise awareness and promote consent at Burning Man.





The project



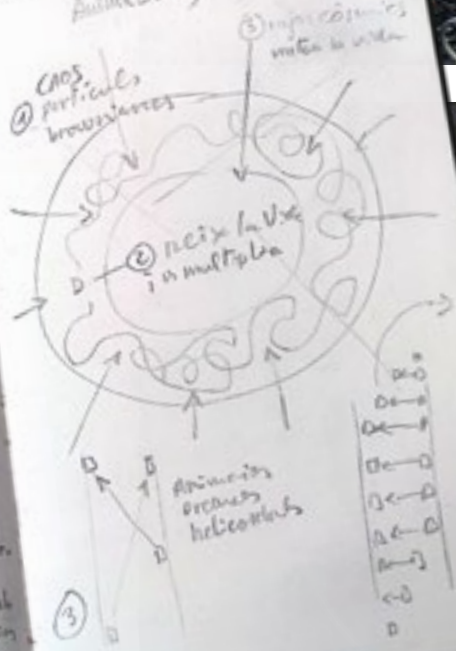


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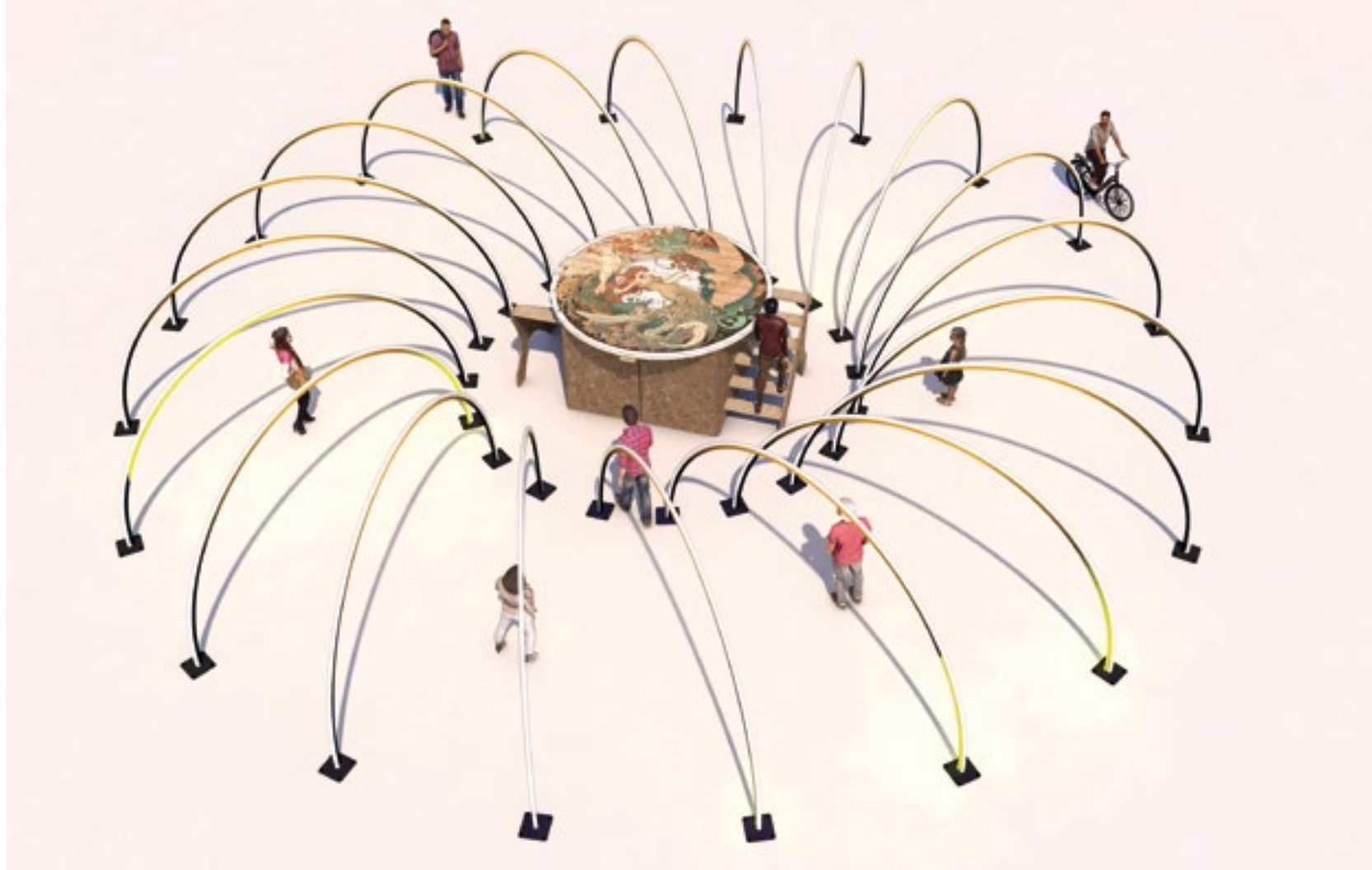
LOOPHOLE
EURNING HAN



Animating LOOPHOLE



- 1) The central button
- 2) The central button
- 3) The central button
- 4) The central button
- 5) The central button
- 6) The central button



Concept proposal presented at Burning Man 2023

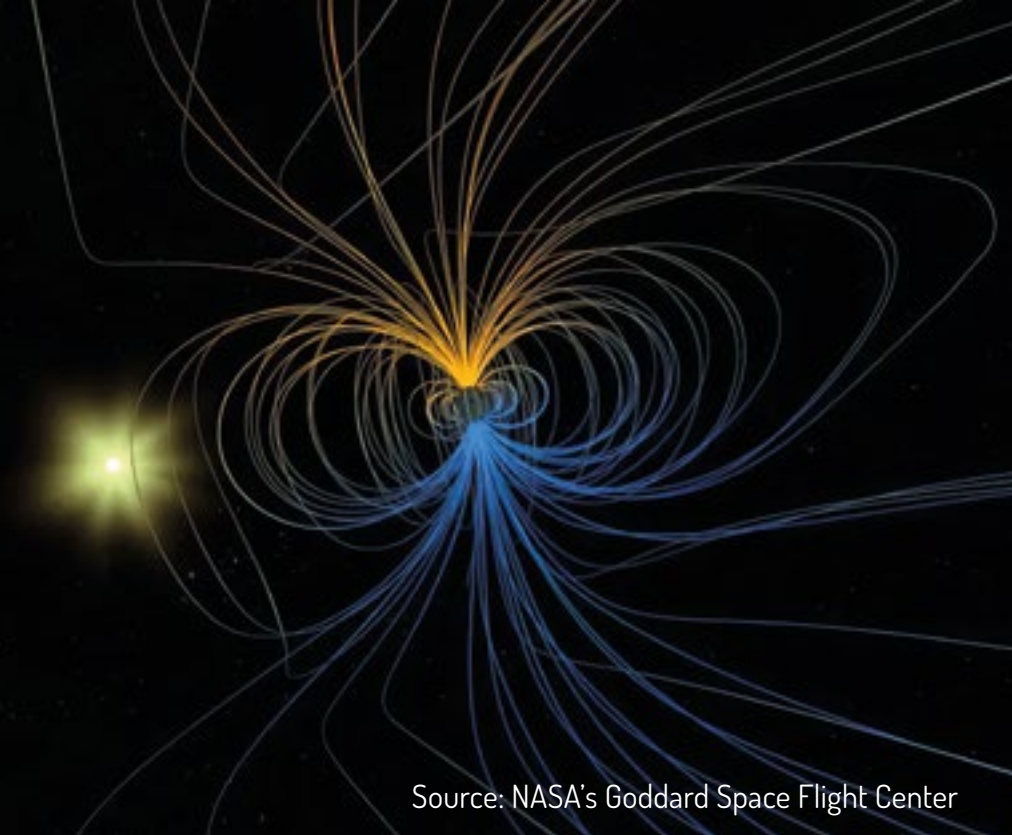
In the autumn of 2022 we sent three proposals to the 'Open call' of the Burning Man 2023, but with little hope since the level of the pieces tends to be very high: large sized, technically sophisticated and with advanced concepts that are difficult to beat with our humble means.

We had to fill in very exhaustive forms, where we had to specify details on the staff, our trajectory, the concept of the installation, its design, structure, the materials and their origin, power system, assembly process,

the interaction with the participants, safety. We had to also detail the disassembly process in accordance with one of the 10 principles of the BM "leaving no trace", in so far as we would do it to leave no trace on the immense plain of the Black Rock Desert.

It had to be accompanied by a detailed budget as well as the data to calculate our carbon footprint. It is really quite a challenge to specify all this data. But we did it.





The proposed concept was that we would create a toroidal structure that would represent the Earth's magnetic field that acts as a shield from cosmic rays, which are lethal to life. But these rays create a magical and unique phenomenon: the auroras (northern and southern lights).

In the central part we would have a platform that would allow the participants to enjoy the light show and for those who wanted to, express themselves by dancing, playing instruments, playing with fire or any emotional or artistic manifestation. It would be a place to celebrate life.



3D renderings of the proposal presented at Burning Man 2023

A couple of months went by and oh surprise! one day, when we were precisely at the Copenhagen Light Festival, we received a message that said:

On behalf of Burning Man Arts and the BRC Honoraria Committee, we would like to thank you for submitting a Letter of Intent for the 2023 Black Rock City Honorarium program. We received an impressive 610 submissions for our consideration.

We are very pleased to invite you to submit a full proposal for your proposed project APP-5411, Loophole. (20-12-2023)

We had succeeded, our LoopHole proposal had been accepted. We're going to Burning Man!

But, expanding the information, we learn that of the 610 proposals, about 300 were selected, but only about 70 would receive financial aid (the so-called honoraria), and only up to 40%, just to cover the costs of the materials.

It must be said that we had serious concerns about our ability to finance, without support, a project of this size, and so far from home. A challenge we had never faced. It must also be said that we were aware of the madness, but it was an chance that who knows if we would ever have it again. Our dream come true.

Now it would be necessary to work hard to make it possible and above all to try to get the necessary resources, which were significant!



Burning Man 2023

Art Installations

Loophole

by: Calidos

from: Tarrega, Catalonia

year: 2023

Loophole is a light installation that starts from a toroid, a basic yet beautiful geometric shape, that recurs in nature and the universe. Most importantly, it's the shape of the magnetic shield of planet Earth that protects LIFE from cosmic ray storms and particles. The circular platform symbolizes our planet where humans and animals are protected from the cosmic particles and LIFE can grow and celebrate. At dark it will also remind an insect with many illuminated legs.

URL: <https://www.calidos.cat/loophole>

Contact: dave@calidos.cat

Donate To This Project

An exciting moment was when we saw our proposal published on the burningman.org website along with the other 300 selected works. The level of the other pieces was impressive and diverse, from large projects like the Man and the Temple, to very simple installations and artworks.



Our piece was modest if we compare it to many of the proposals chosen, but we would be there and leave our humble footprint with the utmost dignity.

The artists were mostly from the USA, but also from many other countries: Armenia, Canada, United Kingdom, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Belgium, Brazil, Belarus, France, Portugal, Philippines, Japan, China, South Africa, Israel, Argentina, Uruguay, Finland, New Zealand, Morocco, India, Germany, Australia, Ukraine, Singapore, Holland, Indonesia, Costa Rica, Colombia, and someone who presented themselves as from 'Planet Earth'. And we, who were published as we requested: we were from Catalonia.

<https://burningman.org/event/2023-art-installations/>

LOOPHOLE light installation at Burning Man




Campaña de recaudación de fondos en equipo
 David Giribet y Daniel Giribet son quienes organizan esta recaudación de fondos.

Hello friends, my name is Deif, I'm a burner and for a long time, I had this dream to bring art to Burning Man. This year we have the opportunity to make this dream a reality. Along with my Dad, Josep and my brother Daniel, we will embark on this challenging journey to Black Rock City in Nevada, USA, with the mission to participate and bring an art piece to one of the most influential and special events in the world. Together we form a creative studio based near Barcelona in Catalonia. We are building this large-scale light installation, called Loophole, the material and logistics costs are very high, so we are looking for different ways to fund it. Being from Europe makes it even more difficult for us to bring art to the Playa so that's why we are asking for your collaboration.

[Leer más](#)

Donar

Compartir



We launched a crowdfunding campaign that would allow family and friends, even any anonymous enthusiasts, to support this wacky project.

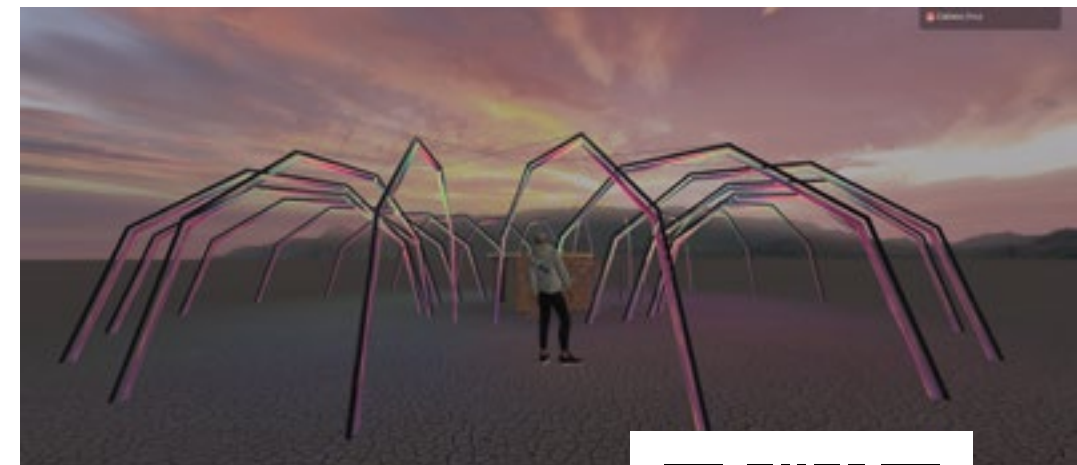
We had an extraordinary team:

David and I leading the project, Dani as technical and financial support, Andreu Casellas, an extraordinary metallurgical technician who would make the metal parts for us, Albert Carrera, audiovisual engineer, who would help us in the electronic design of the LED control systems and Ramon Solé, musician, who would make an original soundtrack.

Last but not least, we also had the support of the Ramon Llull Institute, which graciously supports Catalan artists exhibiting abroad.

You can still donate to the crowdfunding campaign.

www.gofundme.com/f/loophole-light-installation-at-burning-man-2023



BRCvr

A few weeks before the start of Burning Man in Black Rock City, a virtual version of the artworks was presented in the Metaverse, on the Spatial platform, the so-called BRCvr. The LoopHole was present and on launch day we met virtually hundreds of artists and guests, with avatars that we

could interact with and talk to. An interesting initiative. You can enter using the address below. First you need to choose or configure your avatar and then you can move freely through the virtual space.

<https://www.spatial.io/categories/burning-man>

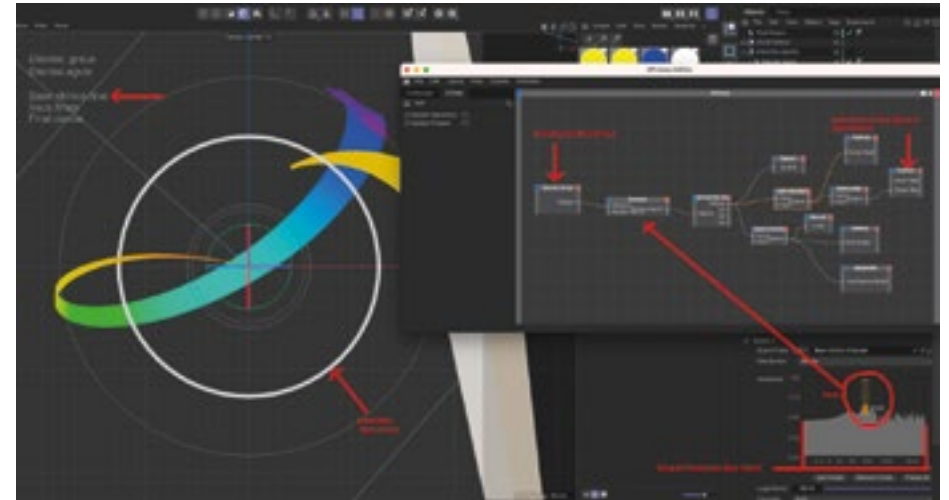


The music

Ramon Solé is a gifted composer and sound designer, and he made the music for us. Soundscapes adapted to the concept proposed by the installation, based on the idea of the LOOPHOLE philosophy, a protective shield for life on Earth. This is the proposed musical script:

- 1- the creation of the earth** Incandescent magma of warm, random colors that fill the entire space
- 2- water** The planet is filled with water, the source of life
- 3- life is born** Particles that move organically and multiply when they collide
- 4- cosmic rays appear** Rain of life-killing blue and green rays
- 5- the earth's magnetic shield is formed** Cyclical animations shaped as rings that are born from one pole and end at the other, simulating aurora borealis
- 6- life reappears shortly** Organic particles that collide and multiply

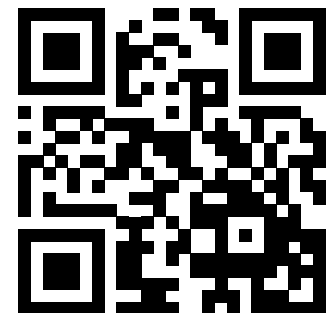
With the soundscapes created by Ramon we created light textures that would be applied on the LED map. The animation was created reactively between sound and image. A good experimental exercise.





Visual simulation of the interaction of music and light:

vimeo.com/850741301



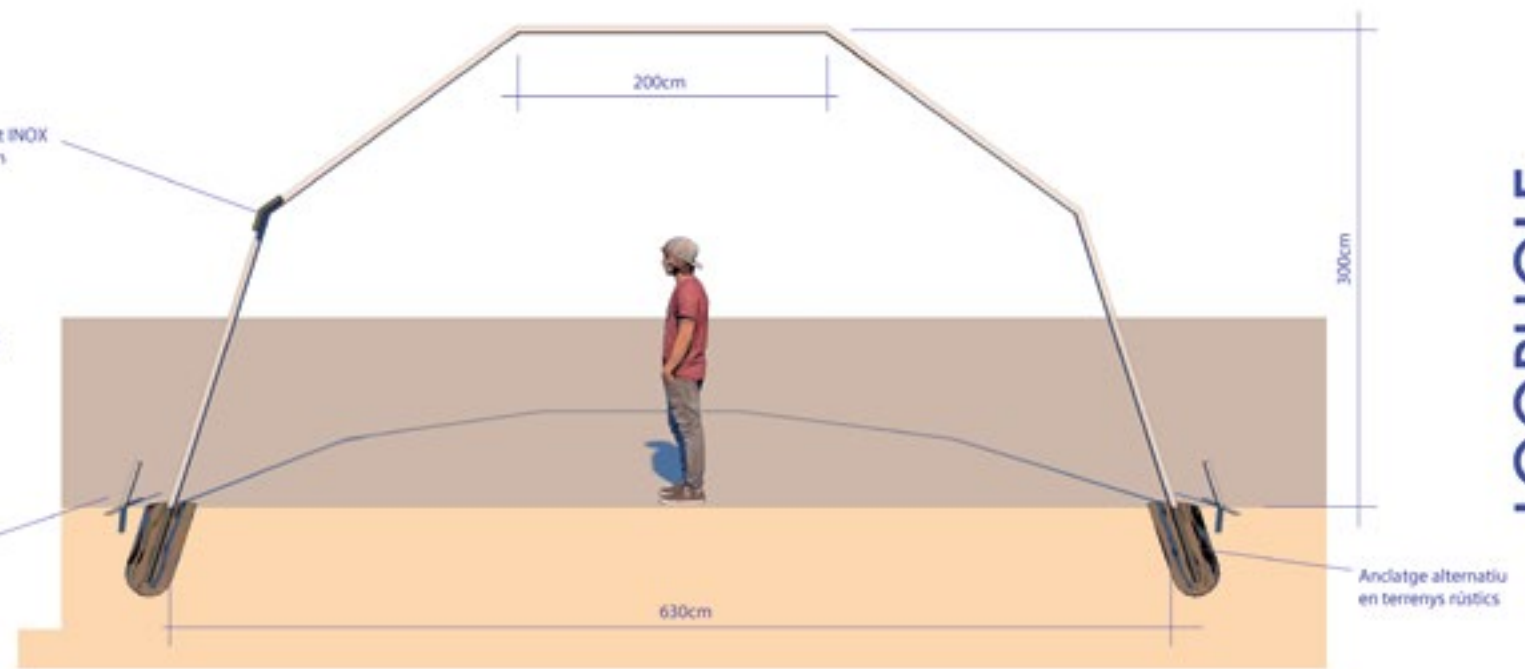
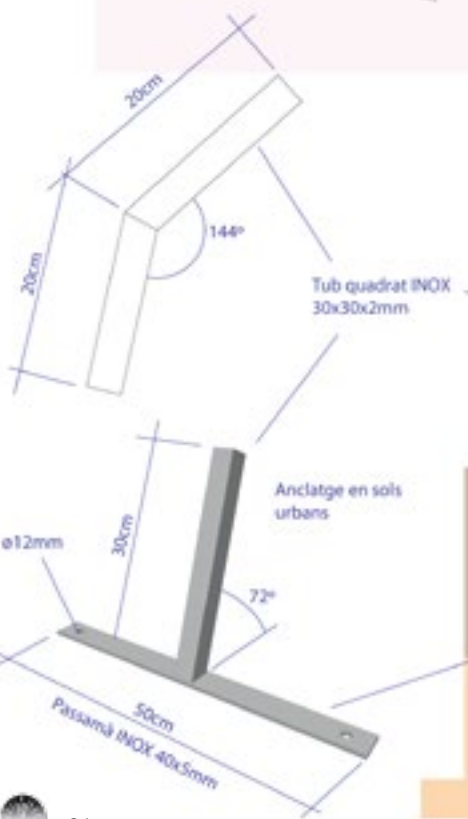
The construction



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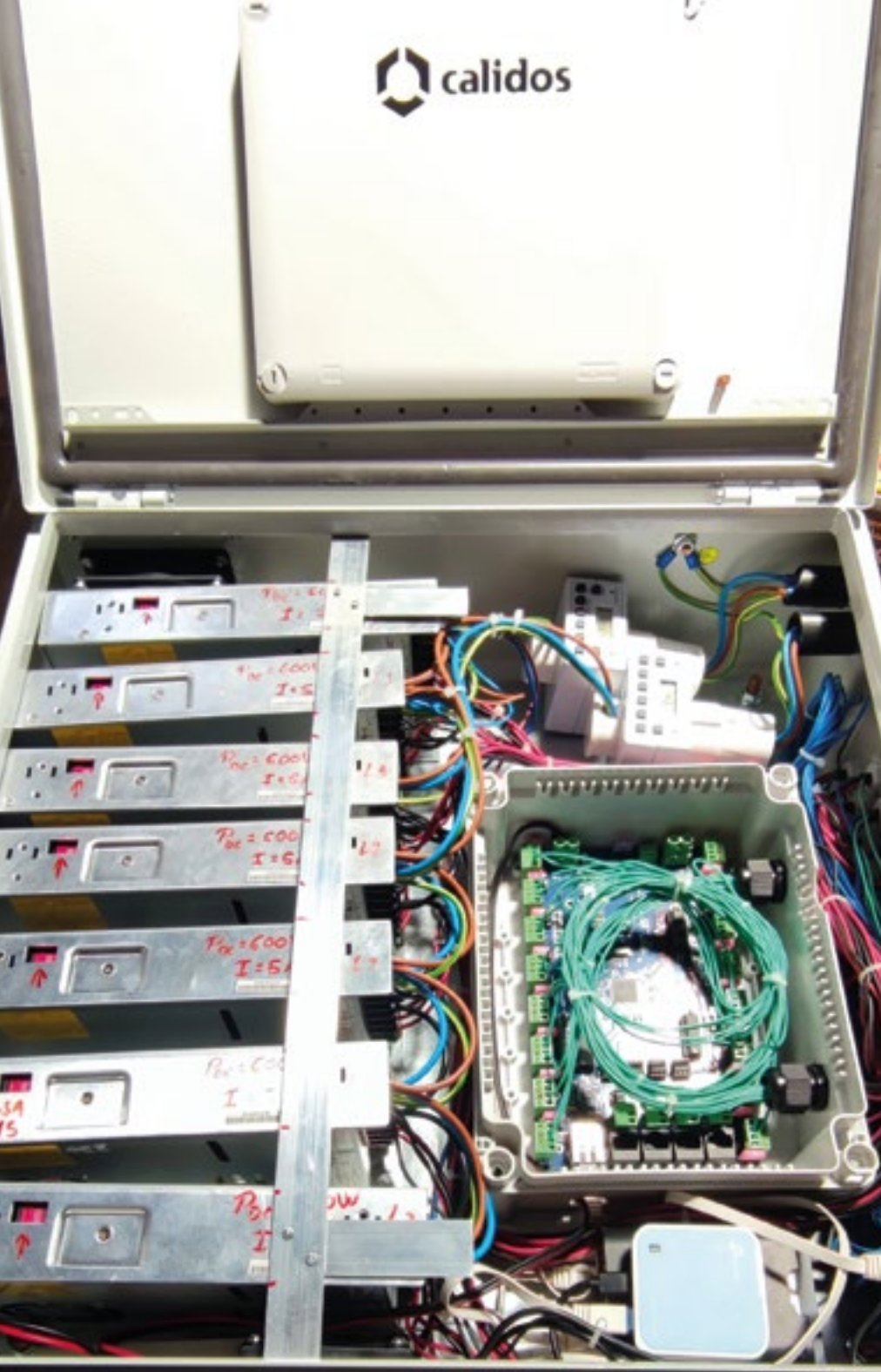
Plataforma
fusta ø3m

Sirga INOX
ø5mm



LOOPHOLE





Albert Carrera, audiovisual engineer, designed the electronic control system. The system controls 12,000 RGB LEDs, distributed in 100 polycarbonate tubes of 2m each. This control box contains 7 power supplies (220/110 to 24v), a board that manages the synchronization between music and light and a wifi router that will allow remote control of the animations.



Flying parcels to Reno (USA)

BURNING MAN ANIMALIA

AUGUST 27- SEPTEMBER 4



THIS SURVIVAL GUIDE IS ESSENTIAL READING FOR
EVERY PARTICIPANT—READ IT CAREFULLY!

Burning Man is not a festival. It is a community and a global cultural movement, with local communities and events flourishing all over the world. Burning Man culture emanated from Black Rock City and has spread to every continent! Our ephemeral city in the Black Rock Desert is an annual experiment in temporary community guided by Radical Self-expression, Radical Self-reliance, and the rest of the core 10 Principles of our culture. In Black Rock City you are responsible for your own survival, safety, and well-being. You are invited to collaborate, be inclusive, creative, connective, and to Leave No Trace.



And finally the tickets arrive!



The trip



Tàrraga-Barcelona-Chicago-Reno



In Reno we stay in a motel and the next day we rent a van. We will need it for 3 weeks.





Reno

Reno is located on an old Indian reservation.

The Reno-Sparks Indian Colony (RSIC) is a federally recognized tribe that was formed in 1936 under the Indian Reorganization Act. It is located in Reno, Nevada, and is made up of 1,296 members of three Great Basin tribes: the Paiutes, the Xoxones, and the Washos. RSIC has 2,000 acres of tribal land in and around Reno, which it obtained in part through the Nevada Native Lands Act of 2016, which transferred more than 71,000 acres of land from the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service from the US to six Nevada tribes.

The RSIC seeks to preserve its culture and expand its economic development in an increasingly demanding world. The tribe has more than 300 employees, half of whom are tribal members. RSIC uses both traditional teachings and practices as well as contemporary business and governance methods.

The members of the RSIC come from groups that inhabited the Great Basin before European colonization. The Paiutes, Xoxones, and Washos spoke different languages, but they respected and traded with each other. The Paiutes occupied a strip from Oregon to Idaho, the Washos gathered annually at Lake Tahoe and dispersed hundreds of miles the rest of the year, and the Xoxones lived in eastern Nevada, Utah and Southern California. The animals of the Great Basin gave them a vision of creation and a wise guide to how to live.

The RSIC originated in the early 20th century when members of related tribes moved to live near Reno for work. They had to fight against discrimination and poverty, and achieved federal recognition after forming a government under the Indian Reorganization Act. Since then, the RSIC has worked to improve the living conditions, health, education and culture of its members.

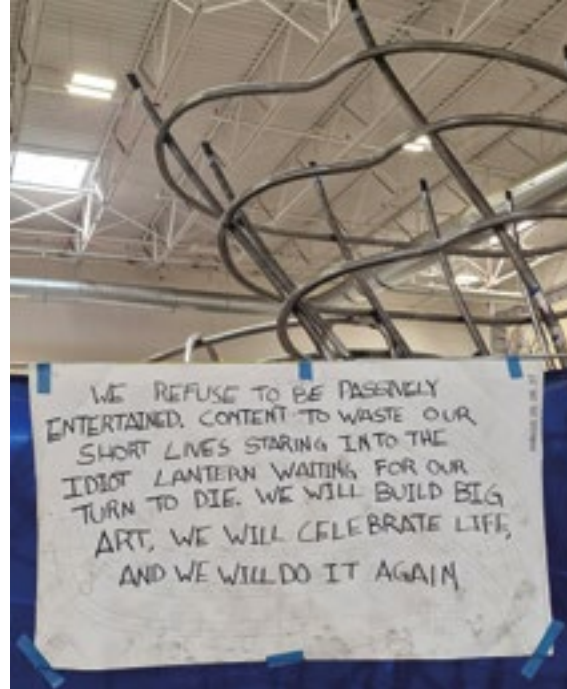
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reno-Sparks_Indian_Colony

The Generator



The Generator is a great co-working space where artists can rent workshop space, temporarily or permanently, to work on their projects. Many 'burners' prepare their creations for Burning Man here. It is a non-profit organization, financed by patrons and where various training courses and workshops are held. They have all kinds of tools: carpentry, metal, laser, numerical control, plasma, welding, a library, etc.

They are defined as "An inclusive creation space driven by the power of art and community. We are here for anyone and everyone who wants to do things. Together we form a community of artists, makers, thinkers, artisans, crafters, engineers and creative weirdos"



At the Generator we made friends and were able to witness the development of many projects up close: 'Juju' with the Heart Factory, the art car Mystic Flyer, the LED-Zeppelin mutant vehicle, the flying fire horse Wings of Glory by Adrian Landon, Andrea Greenlees' stunning Queen Cobra, Ray Frost's My Body, My Home and our friend Turburam Sandagdorj's The Spirit of the Healing Siren and many others who frantically worked until dawn.



We met Ray Frost, an artist from Reno, and watched him build his work, "My Body, My Home," a coyote skeleton made of wood, which was eventually burned on the Playa.



We also met at Turburam Sandagdorj aka Sturo, of Mongolian origin, but resident in the USA for years. It was exciting to see him work tirelessly on his work "The Spirit of the Healing Siren"





The gastronomic theme was simply one of survival and of a very low dietary standard.



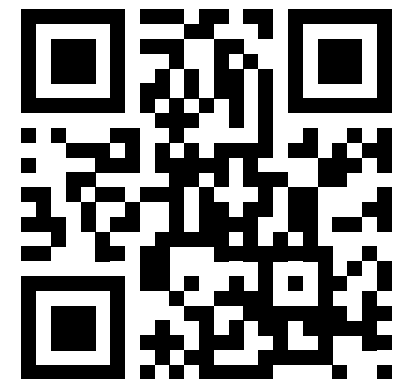
In order to work at the Generator, you must take a mini-course on the use of the spaces and the specific tools you will need to work on your project, and especially the safety measures. You have to pass an exam-test and you are given a magnetic key to come and go freely.

We also pay a visit to a large warehouse where we can buy all the wood and all kinds of hardware elements. The selection is huge.

For 5 days we were building the central platform of the LoopHole.



On the platform we drew the intended image, but improvised some elements, reflecting on their meaning and function, inevitably ephemeral. We would try to finish painting the drawing in the desert, inviting people to participate.



vimeo.com/892930063



August 24th, two days late as BRC did not allow vehicles to enter due to the recent and exceptional rain, but the day finally arrived. We loaded the van up and hit the road towards the Black Rock Desert.

The journey to Black Rock Desert





From Reno to the Black Rock Desert is about three hours. A secondary road, with many straight sections, very dry vegetation and a total absence of trees. The area belongs to the protected Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation. The desert is an old dry lake and is really flat.

It rained a few days ago and we had to delay our arrival at BRC as the ground was muddy and impassable. But anyone setting up artistic installations or the camps, is cleared to enter earlier. On Sunday the doors are open to all participants. We will have to hurry to finish setting up.

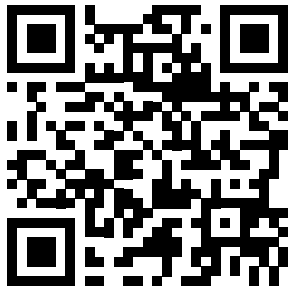
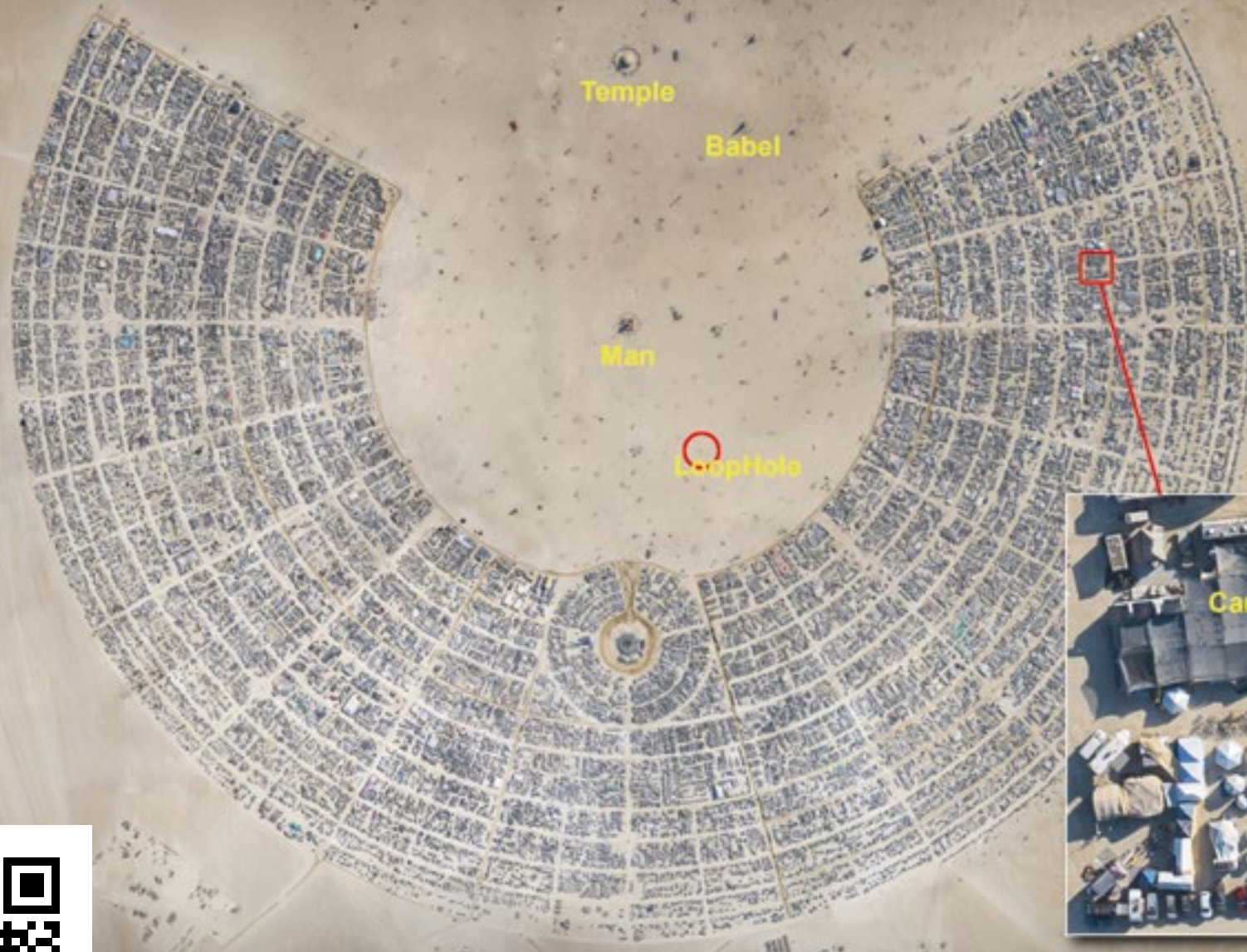




The small town of Gerlach-Empire can be found just before the Black Rock Desert. The rest of the year it must be really quiet. A few days before BM shops and stalls are setup to sell exotic garments and glittery stuff for burners. David buys a hat he likes. You can also buy bikes, water and petrol. In the desert, in Black Rock City, you cannot buy anything, except ice.

Black Rock City





Gigapixel image:

www.gigapan.org/gigapans/233427

Black Rock City 2023, with the location of our field and our facility.

Our field has the address: 2:45-E.

Black Rock City: the ephemeral city of the Burning Man

To host the event a temporary city is built every year, called Black Rock City, designed and built by the participants themselves, and which is then dismantled, vanishing without a trace. The following text, based on an article by Rod Garrett, the main architect of the city since 1997, explains how this ephemeral, organic and cooperative city was born, how it has evolved and how it works today.

The change of location

The city of Black Rock was born in 1991, when the Man burn was moved from Baker Beach in San Francisco to the Black Rock Desert. The first year, only 250 people attended, camping in a circle around the Man. In the following years, four avenues were added that indicated the cardinal directions, a center that concentrated the services and an empty space in front of the city to preserve the view of the Man.

In 1997, the site of the event had to be changed to the Hualapai Valley, due to problems with the BLM (Bureau of Land Management), which is a United States federal agency that manages and protects the public lands where the event is held. The co-created event must meet a number of strict requirements and conditions to obtain a permit from the BLM, such as paying a fee, limiting the number of attendees, ensuring the safety and health of participants, and leaving the site clean and free of traces after the event.

The city plan

In 1998, he returned to the Black Rock Desert, and designed the city plan, which consisted of a circle divided into radial and concentric streets, with the Man in the center and an art zone around it. The concept of “theme camps” was also introduced, which are themed camps that offer visual or participatory experiences to visitors, and which were distributed along the ‘Esplanada’, which is the street closest to the Man, and which outlines the city limits.

In the following years, the city continued to grow and adapt to the needs and desires of the participants. More streets were added, the art area was expanded, the center was improved, zones were created for different types of vehicles, safety and coexistence rules were established, and symbolic and artistic elements were incorporated. The city went from being a machine to being an organism, which moves, breathes, cooperates and regenerates itself every year.

The city operation

The city of Black Rock, which is not a municipality or has a government, only exists during the week of Burning Man, meaning it is a temporary city built by the participants. There are no shops or brands in the city, promoting decommodification and the use of the collective energy of the attendees. Participants can attend individually or in ‘camps’ and the organizers assign the location to each attendee and each camp.

You can participate by buying a ticket or as a volunteer. In fact, a month before the event there are thousands of volunteers building the common infrastructures, including the Man and the Temple.

The city operates with the principles of the Burning Man culture, which are ten values that define the spirit and ethics of the singular event.

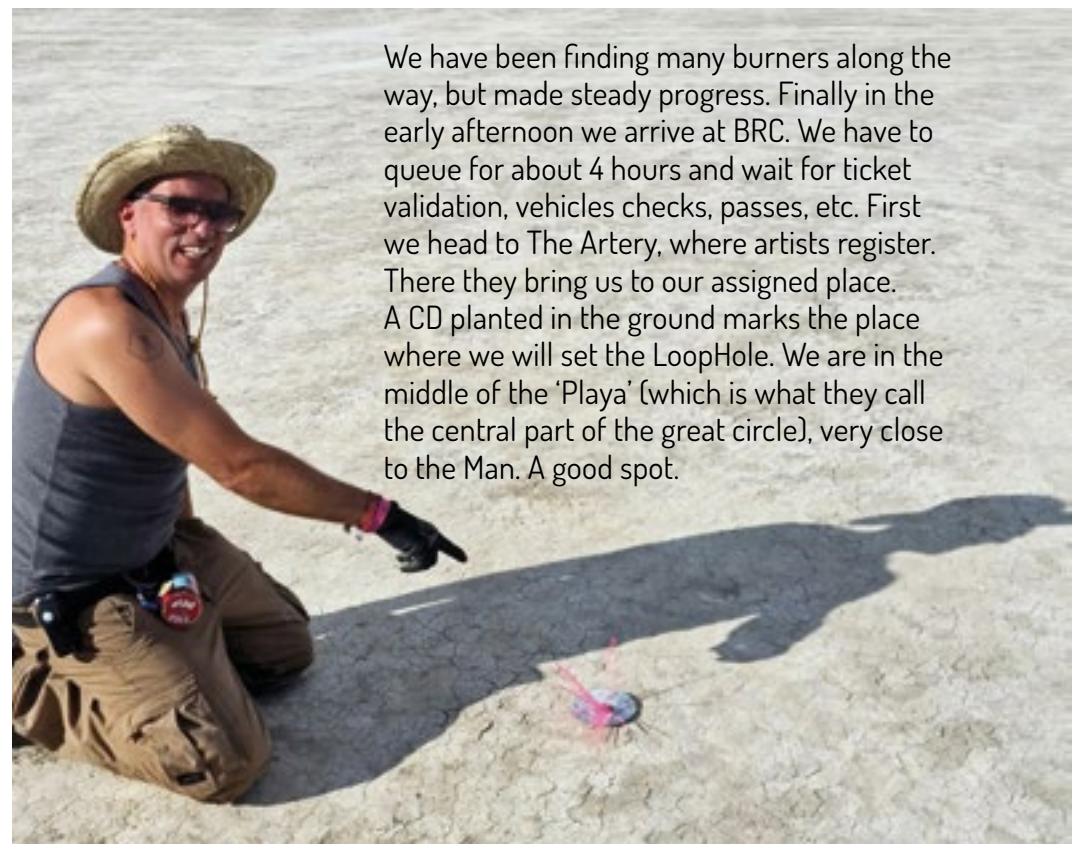
The city also has symbolic and artistic elements that give it identity and meaning. The Man, which is the spiritual and geographical center of the city, represents the power of community and personal transformation. The Temple, which is another wooden structure that burns on Sunday night, represents the place where participants can leave their memories, losses, grief, thanks or wishes. The art zone, which is a space where ephemeral works of art are displayed and created, represents the place where participants can express their creativity and admire that of others.

Conclusion

Black Rock City is a unique city in the world, which every year appears and disappears in the Nevada desert, to host the Burning Man. This ephemeral, organic and cooperative city is the result of the vision, work and passion of thousands of people who share an experience of community, art, self-expression and self-sufficiency. Black Rock City is a city that defies convention, inspires creativity, celebrates diversity and respects the environment. The future of Black Rock City depends on the ability of its creators and inhabitants to keep alive the principles and values that underpin it, and to overcome the challenges posed by its growth and complexity.

journal.burningman.org/2010/04/black-rock-city/building-brc/designing-black-rock-city/





We have been finding many burners along the way, but made steady progress. Finally in the early afternoon we arrive at BRC. We have to queue for about 4 hours and wait for ticket validation, vehicles checks, passes, etc. First we head to The Artery, where artists register. There they bring us to our assigned place. A CD planted in the ground marks the place where we will set the LoopHole. We are in the middle of the 'Playa' (which is what they call the central part of the great circle), very close to the Man. A good spot.

The AXOcamp



In the camp we pitched our tent, a Shiftpod, a futuristic design that emerged a few years ago at the BM. There are currently thousands of units in BRC.

To go to Burning Man you have different options, one is to go on your own: a tent, a van or a trailer, you take all the food and water with you and you have a generator or solar panels to make your energy, if you need it. Inside the BRC there are no shops, nothing can be sold or bought (except ice!). Another other option is to sign up for one of the hundreds of camps. Most are themed, where like-minded people gather. Some camps come together to form 'Villages'.

Our camp is called AXO and together with two other camp form '**La Calaca Village**' to share logistical, power and food resources. Camps are self-sufficient, they must bring all the food, water, generate power, collect waste, share resources, volunteer and share common goals. In the field we have space to pitch a tent, kitchen, three meals a day, three showers a week, power to charge mobile phones and flashlights, bicycles, shade and even a satellite connection with Starlink.

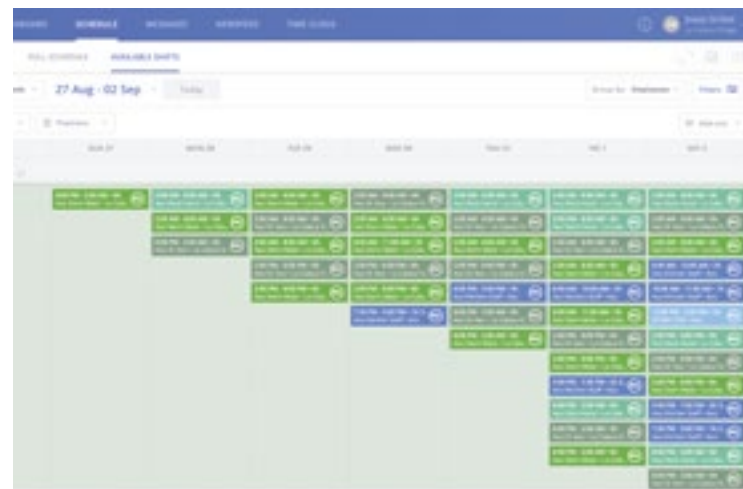




The inspiration behind the AXO field is the amphibian **axolotl** (*Ambystoma mexicanum*), **axolotl** in the native language Nahuatl, which is spoken in Mexico and means “water monster”. It has fascinating abilities that allow it to regenerate any part of its body in case of damage or loss. Limbs, internal organs, spinal cord, even the brain. It is currently an endangered species although it is bred in aquariums, as it is of great interest to science and medicine. The Axo camp contributes part of its income to the research and conservation of this wonderful creature, and is a source of inspiration and creativity.

The Axo Camp has a mutant vehicle shaped like an axolotl, (here in the assembly stage image, on an old bus). The AxoCar sports flame throwers and 40,000 watts of sound, and can accommodate around 40 people on its different platforms. The camp participants do shifts every day on the car outings, to ensure its operation.





Panel of volunteering activities to do at AxoCamp. Each participant of the camp must do a minimum of three shifts selected using an on-line tool, and they can also be seen listed on a blackboard. The shifts can be cooking, cleaning, and also going on outings on the AxoCar, the Axolotl mutant vehicle.



On the left me in one of my kitchen services with our 'chef'. Above, Dani cleaning the solar panels.



With John Geary, artist from Los Angeles



We have the option of taking three showers a week, quite a privilege!



During the days of the event, the only authorized means of transport are bicycles (besides mutant vehicles). In the camp we all have an assigned bike. There is also a workshop to repair them (they have been rolling in this desert for several years), David Knipp is one of the people responsible. In fact, he owns a company that manufactures electric tricycles for taxi use. His philosophy: we fix the bike together so you learn how it is done.



My bike!



Charging center for mobile phones, flashlights and other gadgets. Solar panels are used to the fullest.



The cup is a must-have 'Burner' tool and to survive the BM you must always carry with you. There are no glasses or cups anywhere. Anything you want to drink, in the camp or anywhere, they pour into your personal cup.



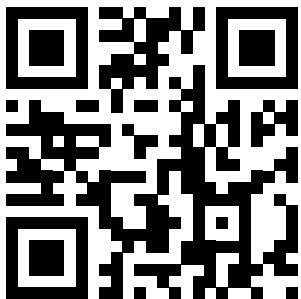
The LoopHole



The day after our arrival, we started assembling our installation in the place we had been told, about two kilometers from our camp. We have permission to go there with a van for three days, after that only bikes and ArtCars are allowed on the beach.

We have everything very well planned and prepared, but our main challenge is the relentless sun that falls and the extreme dryness. We drink water non-stop, about five liters a day. It is also necessary to ingest salty supplements or pickled snacks, since 90% of water is lost when sweating, and with it salts from the body.





An artist from Reno with Scottish ancestry, who we met at the Generator, comes around. He gives us a helping hand.

From time to time you need to stay in the shade to recover and avoid dehydration.





During the installation assembly, sand storms appeared for the first time, or rather dust storms, a very fine dust that gets everywhere. You must wear a handkerchief or mask to cover your mouth and nose, and super tight protective glasses.



Sassy is one of the people from the BM organization that takes care of the artists. He would bring us cold beers or anything we needed.

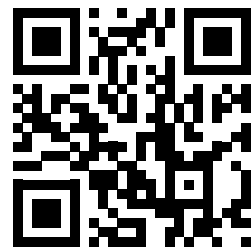


During the assembly, the ASS (Art Support Services) often pass by, offering help and sometimes bringing us food, drinks, and especially hugs!



On Saturday the 26th Dani arrives from London, now we will have more hands to finish the installation.

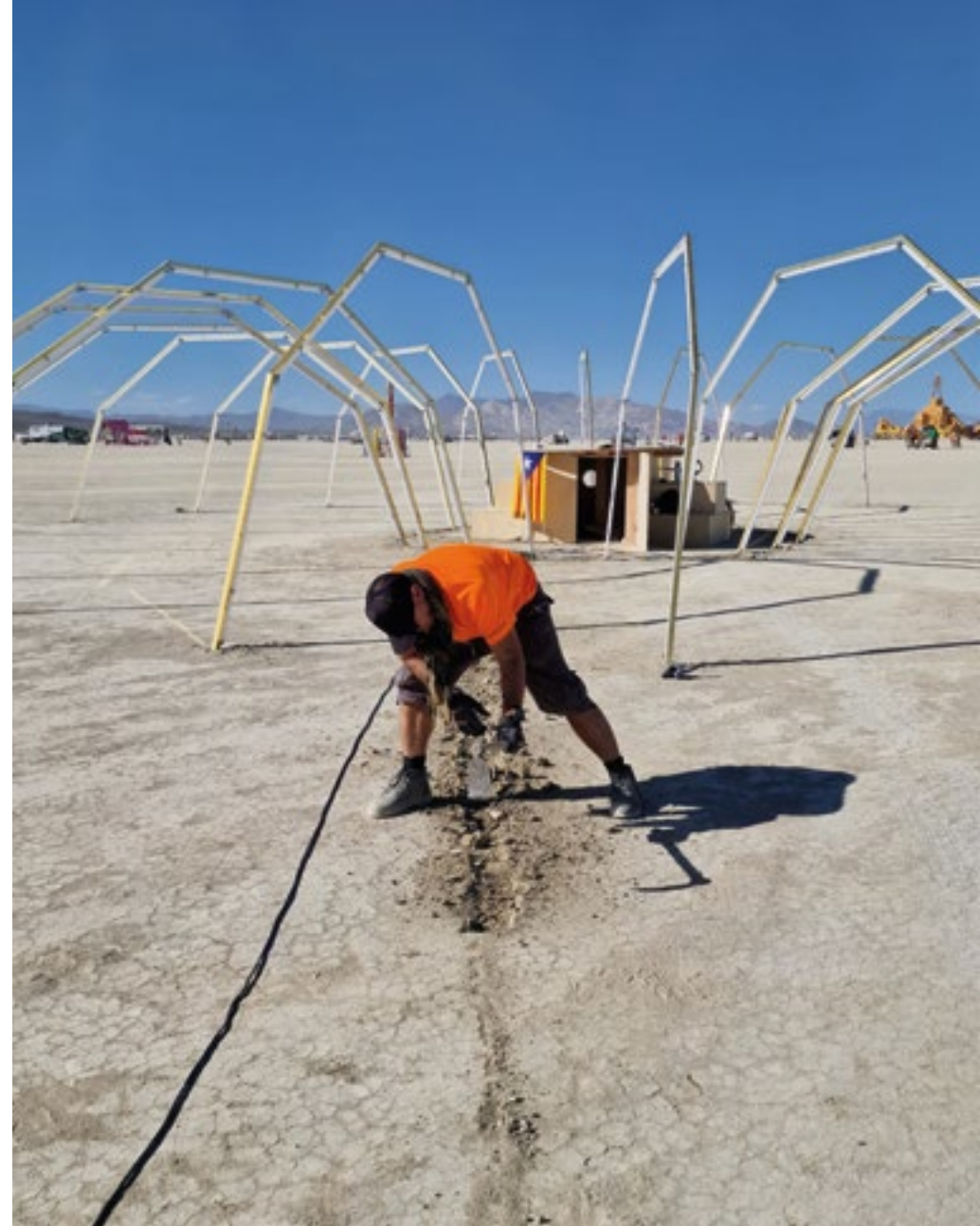
Finally, on Sunday morning the 27th we finish the assembly of the LoopHole. Now all that remains is to test the entire electrical and digital control system. We hope it will be dark soon. Today at midnight the doors to Burning Man open. Let's see what happens.



Dusk falls slowly on these endless skies, a wonderful gradient of reddish and violet color behind the Black Rock mountains. A magical moment. We connect all the cables, still unburied, just to do a test, start the generator, wait 30 seconds and... It works! The colored lights start spinning. Wow! Hugs, we made it! And then people start appearing with all kinds of bikes, spinning like crazy inside the LoopHole, dozens, hundreds of bikes. And after a few minutes a mutant vehicle appears, shaped like a piano, with a singer playing and singing live. Wow, the magic has begun!



Monday the 28th. Non-mutant vehicles can no longer circulate, only bicycles. In our camp they provide each of us with a bicycle, a bit run down, but an indispensable resource in such a big place.



Dani and I are going to protect the power-generator with a wooden box we have built and bury the cables under the relentless sun.



Today has been a hard day, we are tired, we are going straight to the Shiftpod to sleep. But Johnny, the artist who lives in Los Angeles, tells us: "Hey, the AxoCar is on, and we'll go see the LoopHole, you can't miss it!" Oops, amazing, we suddenly feel awake. We get on the AXO and it starts. The music at full blast, fire to the right and left. It travels very slowly, as if floating. We are a good bunch of camp members up on the platform. Music throughout. Wherever we pass, people greet us, shout, dance, throw things at us, dozens of burner bikes start following, other artcars greet us by firing their flame throwers. An experience difficult to explain.





We approach the LoopHole, slowly, spinning around it, like a spaceship that wants to dock with another space vessel. The music is delirious, people appear from nowhere, hundreds of people arrive and start dancing frantically.

David takes out a tablet, which we have connected to the wifi generated by the LoopHole so the color and light animations can be controlled. The tablet is passed from hand to hand and people are blown away. We have made it.

Then they invite David to DJ, he says 'I have no idea how this deck works, but let's see what comes out'. He takes out the laptop, connects it to the deck and does a session that leaves people trapped, the atmosphere is indescribable. A dream.





vimeo.com/892932974







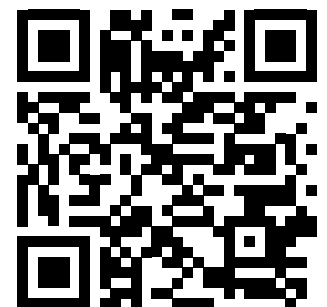
The LoopHole is a modest installation, we are aware of that from the beginning of the adventure, but when night falls and the LED light starts to rotate with their magical animations, it becomes a pole of attraction. From afar people see it, come with their bicycles and start spinning and spinning inside. While spinning a girl exclaims: 'the lights are following me!'.

People hug and congratulate us, and thank us for sharing this art.

And when a mutant vehicle parks in front with the music, people start dancing and the platform becomes a space of great prominence. We exceeded expectations!







vimeo.com/849608829/3f5a2d3a1e





Mutant vehicles



Rocket Car by Californian artist David Best. Built in 2003 with a 1973 Cadillac Sedan DeVille as a base, it measures over 12 meters long.

Mutant vehicles, or also called ArtCars, are modified vehicles that have unique characteristics, due to their aesthetics or ingenuity. Some are motorized cars, others moved with pedals but the vast majority are old modified buses on top which a structure is built with the most varied aesthetics. Many carry platforms that people can climb on and travel with. The vast majority also carry powerful sound equipment, LED lights, lasers and fire extinguishers. The ArtCars are the only ones that can drive around the Playa on the days of the event, but to do so they must first pass a technical inspection at Central Services. One of the most famous was the Mayan Warrior, but unfortunately it burned down on a road in Mexico a few months ago. It is financed by groups of people or camps, with their direct contributions and with crowdfunding campaigns. Creativity has no limits.



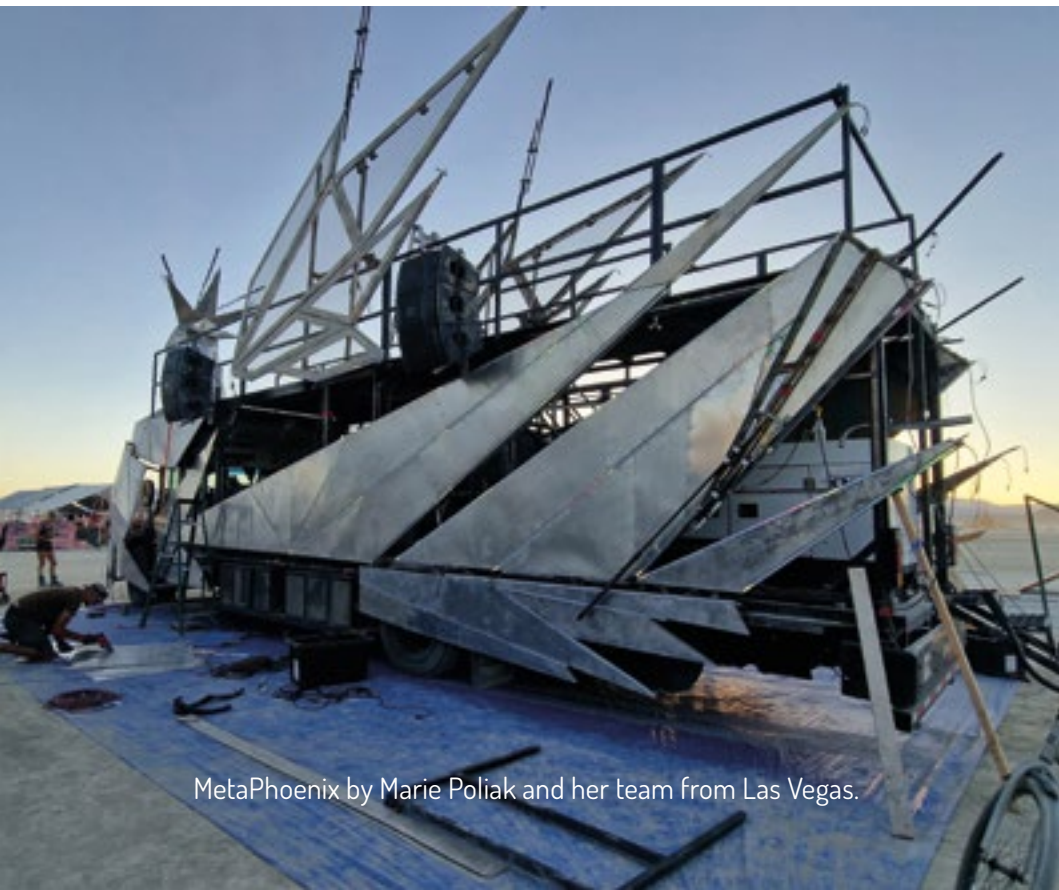
David Best's new art car





Phoenix by Marie Poliak and her team from Las Vegas.

El Pulpo Magnífico



MetaPhoenix by Marie Poliak and her team from Las Vegas.





Titanic's End. titanicsend.com



EMPIRE, a project they have worked on for eight years



A "fire extinguisher" loaded with Propane gas!

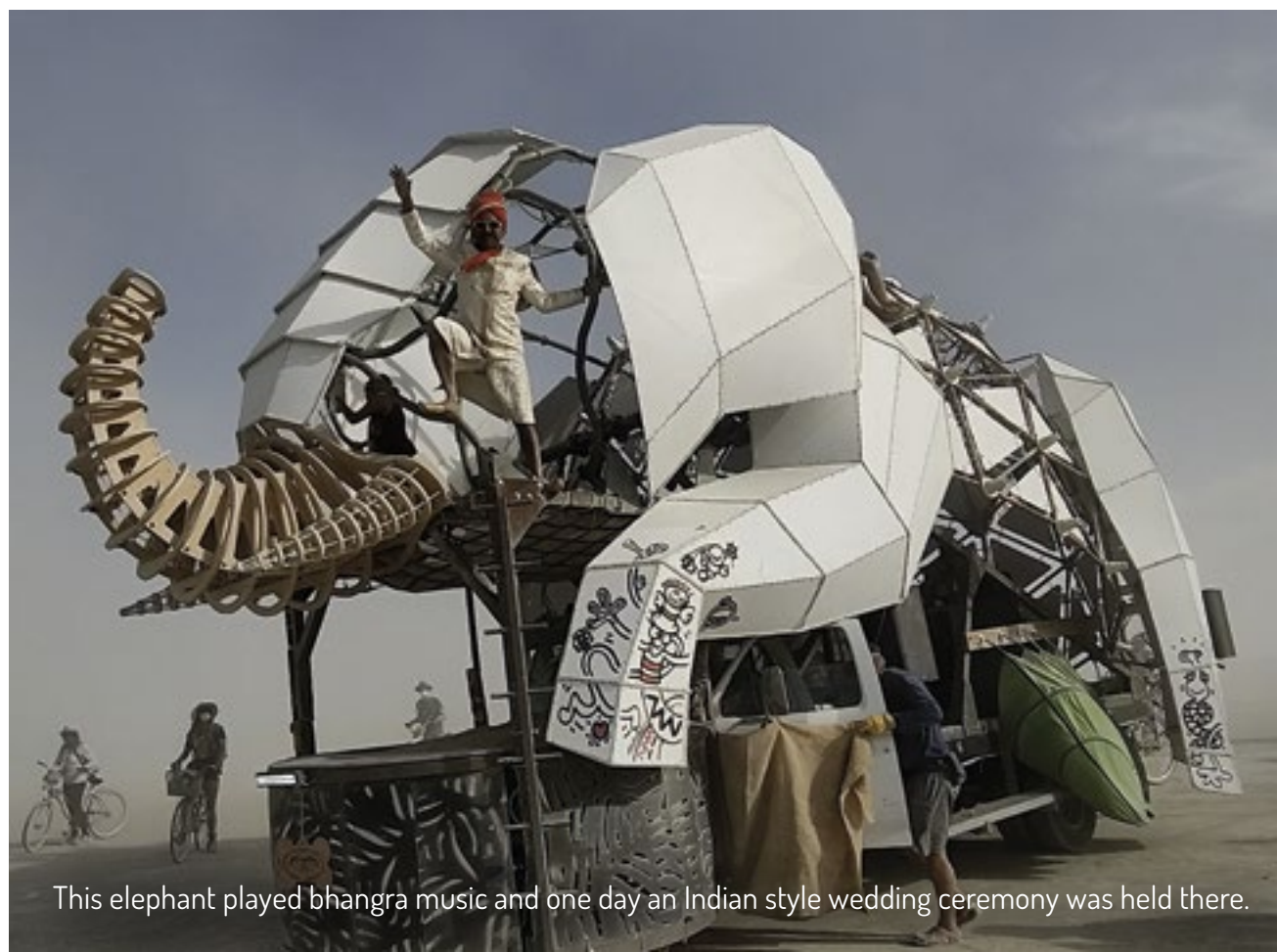


The Golden Gate Bridge



LED-Zeppelin

Preparing the drones



This elephant played bhangra music and one day an Indian style wedding ceremony was held there.





El pulpo magnífico





Deep Playa Taxi

AxoCar



The AxoCar is our car mutant vehicle, based on the shape of the axolotl, the amphibian with extraordinary self-generating properties. It is equipped with 40,000 watts of sound power, propane gas flame throwers, and LED lights. It is built on an old school bus. Attached to the back door is an industrial generator and some rails to hang the team's bikes. The team that runs it is made up of a captain, who makes the decisions, a driver, who must have experience driving buses, a navigator, who handles maps and GPS, two public access controllers, two platform controllers, and a couple more that stay on the ground and give call outs to the rest of the team. There is always a DJ, often somebody from the Axo camp or event guests DJs of international renown. The teams change every day with the camp volunteers.



All members of the camp participate in the assembly of the AxoCar. There is the part of the external structure, which gives it its unique shape, the two upper platforms, the powerful sound equipment and the entire fire system that must pass strict supervision. In the back it drags an industrial generator and rails all around to hang the bikes of the team people.

When it is assembled, a 'training' is given to all members of the camp, explaining the philosophy and responsibilities of each volunteer who will go with the AxoCar on its adventures.

axotlartcar.com





The inside of the bus is for the exclusive use of the team, a place of rest from the long afternoons, evenings and nights, until sunrise and beyond.



On each outing, the Axo brings different DJs, some internationally famous: Polo & Pan, Kruder & Dorfmeister and others.





The AxoCar also brings a very unique participant on every outing: the Dr. Axo, with the book that visually explains the unique characteristics of the axolotl and the research and conservation projects on it, as well as the characteristics of the AxoCar. I was appointed Dr. Axo!





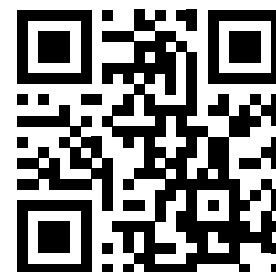
On its trips around Playa the AxoCar often parks in front of large installations, where it holds music sessions with different DJs and people can access its two platforms. Sessions last until sunrise and beyond.

Here in this image we can see the Axo near the 300 helium balloons installation by Robert Bose that Dani helped assembly as a volunteer.

In the sky the moon, which was full that day and set behind the Black Rocks at the same time as the sun rose on the opposite side of the desert.



Tycho sunrise DJ set
vimeo.com/892938974





Art installations



"Temple Anam Cara" by: A Celtic Light and Obsydian Studios creation (San Francisco, CA, USA). @templeanamcara



"Awaken Thee" by Darrell Ansted (Boulder, CO, USA)



"Empyrean Gate" by Anthony Fieldman and James Tramel, with the Entheos Community Artist Collective (San Francisco, CA, USA)



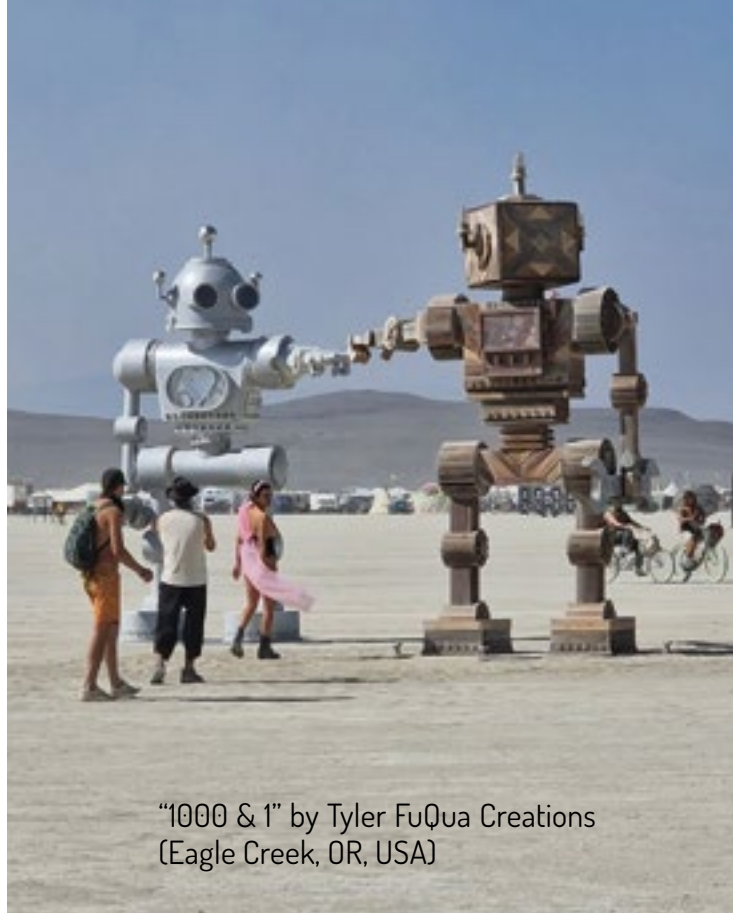
"Infinity" by Matt McConnell (Raleigh, NC, USA)



"Over Ruled" by Cody Smith & Looking Up Arts (San Francisco, CA, USA)



"Moroccan ParTea" by Hind Baghdadi (Kenitra, Morocco)



"1000 & 1" by Tyler FuQwa Creations
(Eagle Creek, OR, USA)



"Big Spinning Wheels" by PDA
(Roxbury, NY, USA)



"Black Rock Station" by Black Rock Transportation Company
(Felton, CA, USA)



"ATABEY's Treasure" by NiNo (Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico)



"Queen Cobra" by Andrea Greenlees, Andy Tibbetts, and Josh Haywood
(London, United Kingdom & Reno, NV, USA)



"Odyssey" by Clayton Blake Art
(Currumbin Queensland, Austràlia)



"Invisible Trojan Unicorn" by Invisible Pink Unicorns
(Los Angeles, CA, USA)



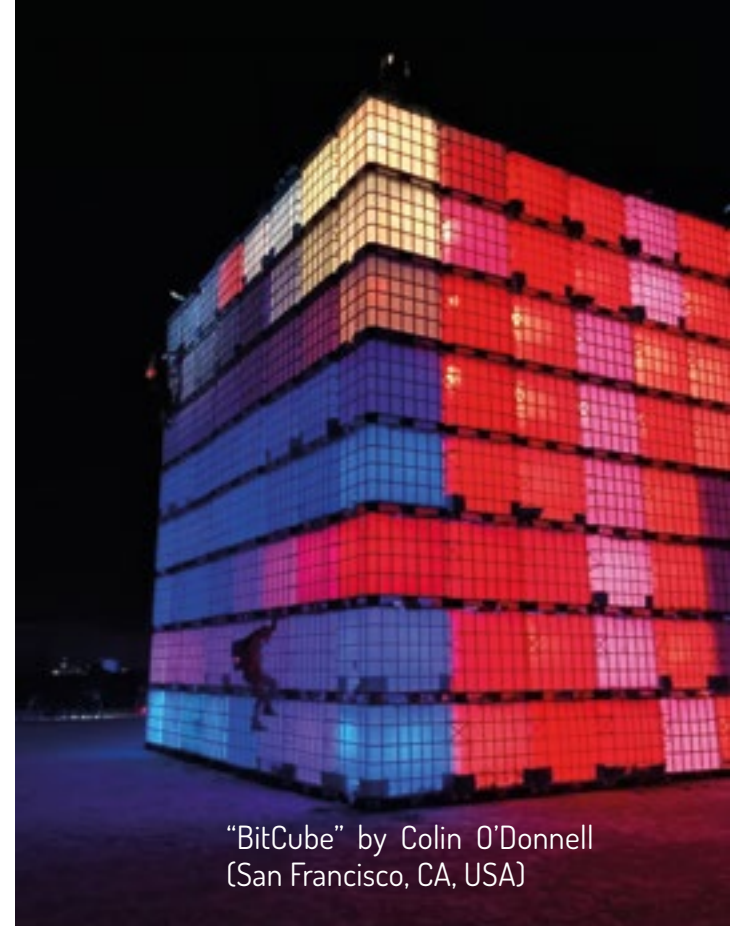
"Mona" by Miao He (Shehong, Xina)



"1000 Hands" by Nicholas DeBruyne & Maria Gotay and Wevolve Labs & Art Island (Austin, TX, USA)



"Vagr" by Misha Liberte (Yerevan, Armenia)



"BitCube" by Colin O'Donnell (San Francisco, CA, USA)





"Jíbaro Soy..." by Mark Rivera aka Kidnetick
(Bayamón, Puerto Rico)



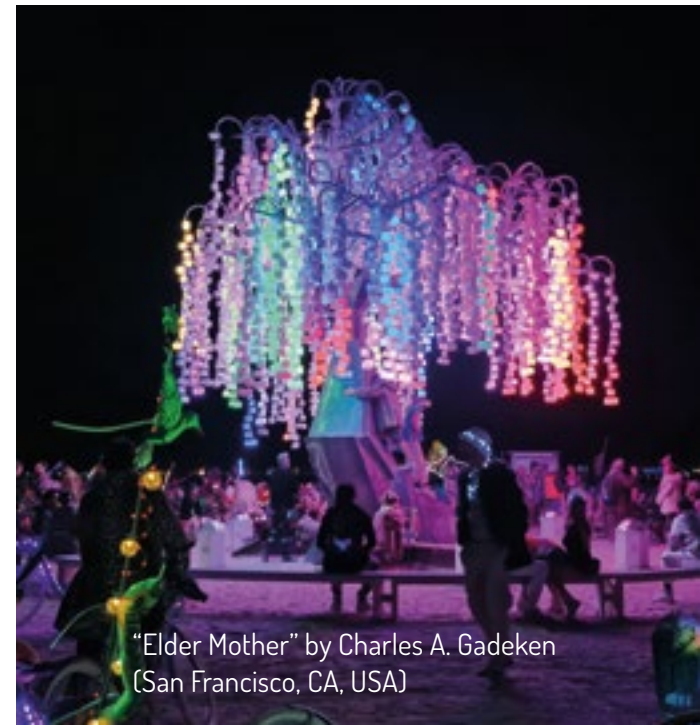
"Wings of Glory" by @adrian_landon
(Reno, NV, US)



"Mariposa" by Christopher Schardt
(Oakland, CA, USA)



"Burden of The Beast" by Walker Babington
(New Orleans, LA, USA)



"Elder Mother" by Charles A. Gadeken
(San Francisco, CA, USA)

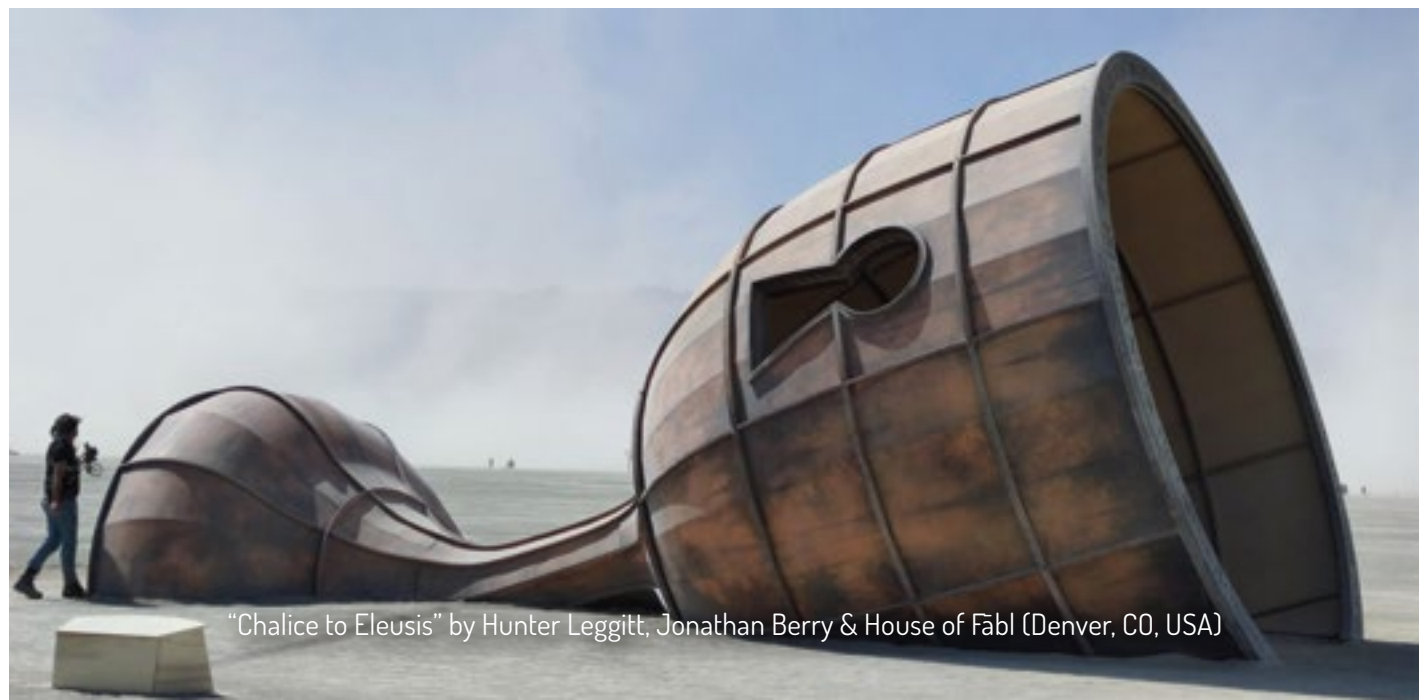




"Spiruvous" by BoKo Fine Art (Las Vegas, NV, USA)



"CREATING THE UNIMAGINABLE" by Walid Nasralla - Twilight Language (San Francisco, CA, USA)



"Chalice to Eleusis" by Hunter Leggitt, Jonathan Berry & House of Fäbl (Denver, CO, USA)



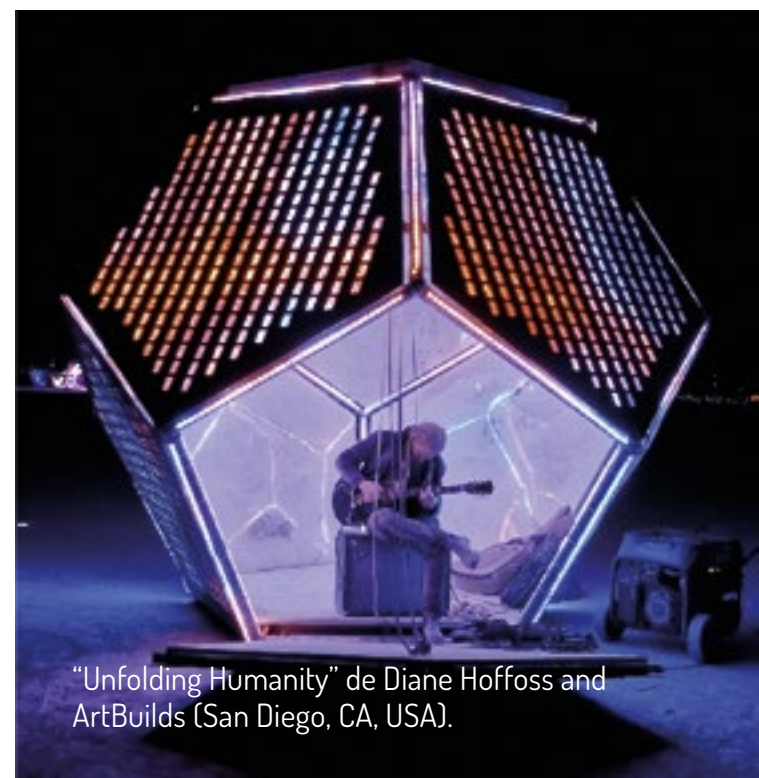
"The Spirit of the Healing Siren" by Turburam Sandagdorj alies Sturo



"Build A Seat 2.0" deMo Osunbor
(Brooklyn, NY, USA)



"Oneirotica" by Kirsten Berg (Berkeley, CA)
Reflects a merging of two forces that move us/ through us.



"Unfolding Humanity" de Diane Hoffoss and
ArtBuilds (San Diego, CA, USA).



This is a small sample of the installations that were on the Playa, the ones we saw and took pictures of, but there were hundreds that we did not visit in this creative apotheosis.

List and official description of all installations:

burningman.org/about/history/brc-history/event-archives/2023-event-archive/2023-art-installations/





“Project Flashlight” de Neal Strickberger (San Francisco, CA, USA)

The camps



In this camp they serve all kinds of teas and play live music.



Many camps offered diverse sets of live music, many workshops and talks of all kinds.

Others offered food and drinks, from fresh lemonade to tequila to high-end exotic blends.



DISTRIKT

Is a non-profit arts and music organization that supports an inclusive and diverse community of performers and artists through events, partnerships, community engagement, mentorship and relationship building.



distrikt.org



In this field you could download your vital 'backpack'.



In BRC there are 44 camps that repair bikes (for free of course).



There is also a camp for the 'rangers' responsible for BRC security.
To apply to be a volunteer Ranger you need to fill in a specific survey:

burningman.org/event/participate/volunteering/teams/brc-rangers/



A ranger in the Temple.



With Dani we met in a camp that gave fresh beer or cider. A little treasure in the middle of the desert.





MYSTIC Camp

They are defined as “A mixture of creative talent and energy. Inspired by a sense of mystery and wonder, we perceive the consciousness of “We are all one.” Mystics encourage the enigmatic spirit to explore a deeper connection not only in this planet and all within it, but in the realm of the entire Universe. Camp Mystic is an ongoing experiment in the power of friendship, love, artistic expression, commitment, and exploration into the farthest reaches of human development and beyond. The celebration and pursuit of meaningful happiness is what has sustained this community year after year as it grows in both numbers and potential for greatness.”

campmystic.org

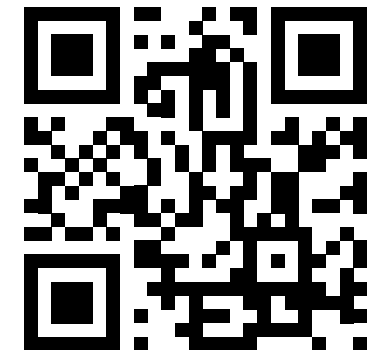


Thunderdome (The thunder dome).

This camp emulates the struggles of the MadMax post-apocalyptic fiction. A place where people sign up to 'fight' with foam sticks, and hanging from ropes. All with a gothic ambience and the audience on top of the geodesic structure, with deafening punk-heavy music.



vimeo.com/892937832





Holi Camp, here you can stand naked at the bottom of a tunnel and they 'shoot' paint at you using compressed air guns, to the enjoyment of the participants. David and Dani participated and that's how they ended (I sneaked out :-).



The Alchemy An enormous pyramid, 22m high, with spectacular projections on the outside walls generated with AI, Inside you can find music sessions and transformational workshops, 24 hours a day. Its motto is: "Transform yourself, transform the world." Live the radical metamorphosis on a journey through the seven stages of Alchemy, in synergy with the seven days of Burning Man".

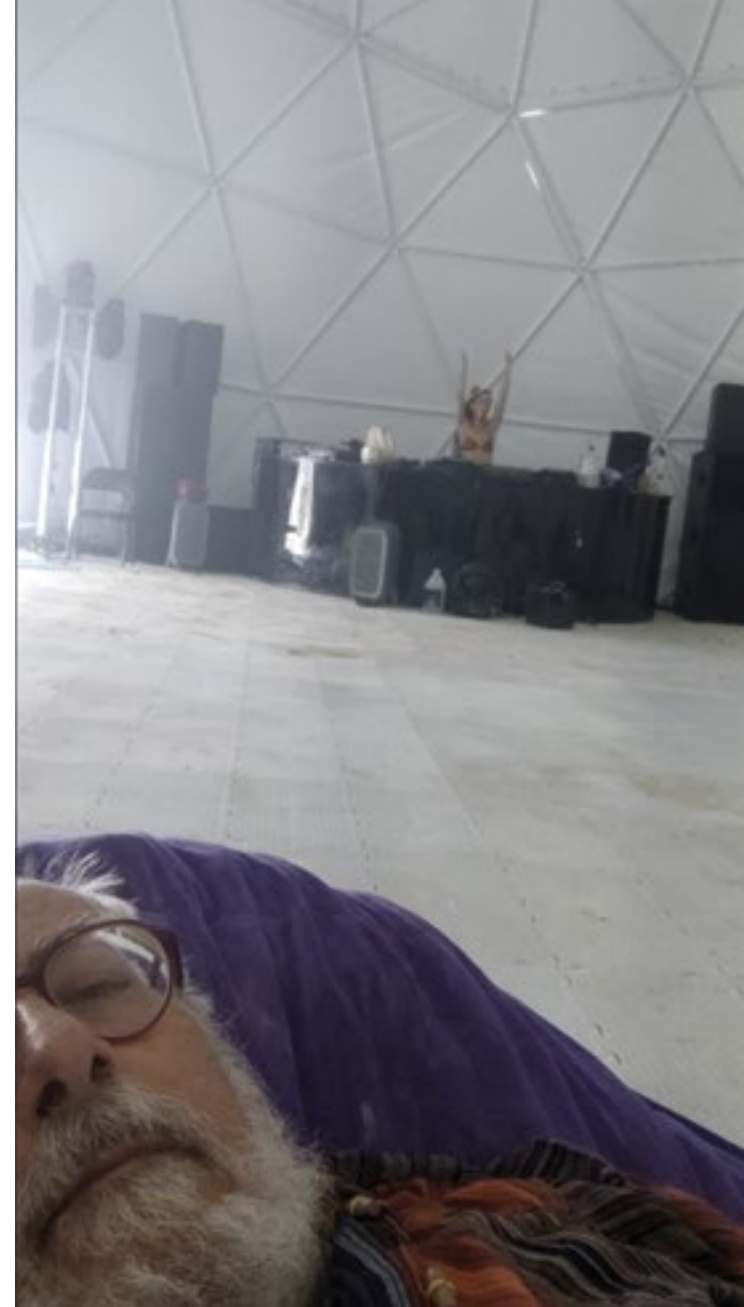
playalchemist.com



There were several camps of emergency services. Among them those of “medical and mental health” services where one day I went to take my blood pressure. A girl from the health camp asked me questions and wrote them down on a tablet: age, weight, previous pathologies, gender... I hesitated for a moment at his strangeness, ah of course, my gender, it didn't have to be obvious from my appearance. I was attended by a young cardiologist and he tells me “you are at 18, it is high, but it is not the highest pressure in the universe. If you don't have a headache, everything is fine.”



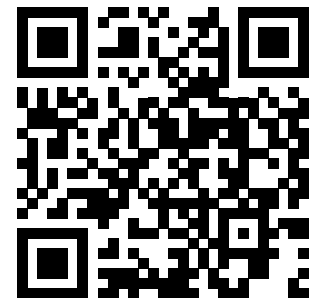
Our neighbors they had three domes, huge geodesic domes. Inside they had relaxing music sessions, with large cushions to contemplate the psychedelic projections on the ceiling. One day of the rains I went there and I was alone, a beautiful girl put on some music, Pink Floyd (remastered 'techno' though), she brought me food, drinks and she washed my hands with cologne. Was it real? Was an angel? A dream? Was I in heaven?





At night the bustle was indescribable. Thousands and thousands of bikes and hundreds of mutant vehicles driving chaotically around the Playa, visiting installations or simply enjoying the place and the moment, fires, lasers, people dancing everywhere and music coming from all around. The whole horizon was a splash of colored lights from the camps in full activity. You cannot experience such an atmosphere anywhere else.

vimeo.com/893374903/5a7489389e



Spontaneous





Balloon Chain by Robert Bose
instagram.com/balloonchain

Walking through the various streets of BRC we can find all kinds of people doing their own performance: one who inflated 300 red balloons with helium and who was moving them around the Playa by bicycle and anyone could partake. A girl who offered a cup of something strong and the guy

who took pictures, printed them on photographic paper and then went around on a bicycle giving them away. The ones that offered lemonade in the middle of the desert, the ones that offered hugs of three kinds, and so much shared imagination.



Our friend Juju with his 'Heart Factory' who traveled pulling a cart with his hearts that he gave away, together with his hugs, also performed spectacular magic tricks. He lives in Paris but travels around the world giving smiles and hugs... With a big heart.



Video: mary.thengvall

In many camps there were pianos and often a random person would sit there and improvise a concert. There were artists with extraordinary talent. Totally anonymous.



Single-person autonomous solar vehicle. The 'maker' culture is very present there.



vimeo.com/893487158/27c1c094dc





Photo: (cc) Duncan Rawlinson duncan.co/Burning-Man-2023

The wedding





Mary and Jeremy, two of the leaders of the Axo camp got married in front of the Oneirotica facility. The AxoCar brought the music and the fire.

The magic bike





Throughout the BRC the bicycle is a fundamental, indispensable element. There are all kinds of bicycles (some already electric which are quite dangerous as they can go quite fast). People decorate them, especially with small LED strips that, in addition to the aesthetics, make them visible in the frenetic nights and with the frantic and chaotic passage of the mutant vehicles. It is a recommendation that is made to everyone, if you go around the Playa you must be lit up.

One day I worked as Dr. Axo around the AxoCar, it was already getting dark, I got lost and the Axo left with the music on full blast. I ran to the back trying to stop the Axo, but it was too late, doors were closed and the people dancing on the platforms did not see me.

I was completely alone, in the middle of the desert, with that endless reddish sky behind the Black Rocks. You could hear people howling in the distance, which many tend to do when the sun goes down and the Moon is up. I suddenly realized that I did not have a light on me, I did not bring water and above all I did not have a bike. And I am wearing sunglasses! I am the middle of the Playa, lost, the whole horizon around me is a flood of lights and rotating laser lines. And a sandstorm begins. I see a landmark nearby, it is the Temple. I walk there to seek shelter. The image inside is phantasmagoric. Someone sings, someone cries, many embrace. I rest for a while but I want to go back to our camp, drink water and sleep. You can no longer see the lights on the horizon, it is impossible to orient yourself. Someone tells me: follow the Moon. Indeed, the full Moon is clearly visible in the sky. As it had not occurred to me, the Moon marks the southeast, which is where our camp is located. I set out on foot, a lonely walk through this desert of very

fine dust, where you see nothing beyond a few meters. Only the Moon in the sky. I hope a mutant vehicle does not run me over.

After a while, a guy with a bicycle emerges from the middle of the storm and says to me: "you need a bicycle, this is for you". What about you? He says "Don't worry, I already have another one, and vanishes like a ghost." And when I still had not recovered from the bewilderment and surprise, a new angel appears, a girl, very young, who says: "you need a light", and gives me a strip of LED lights and proceeds to disappear into the darkness. Was it the magic of Burning Man? Yes.

I was not sleepy anymore and I rode around all night on my new **magic bike**. I was floating above the desert, weightless.

The Temple





!Temple of the Heart" by Ela Madej and Reed Finlay (San Francisco, CA, USA)





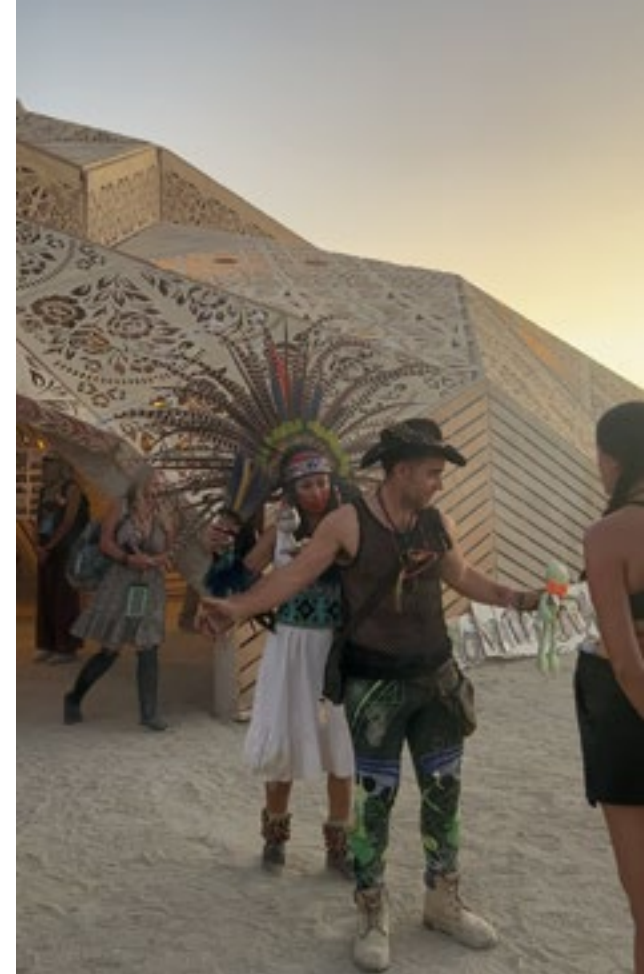
TEMPLE OF THE HEART

The Temple, a magical place par excellence. The emotional center, the heart of Black Rock City.

Its creators define it as "A vessel to reconnect with our hearts and a space for community healing. With space for anyone who is grieving, it helps channel it to heaven. Through flowers, Eastern European lace and warm feminine energy, She induces feelings of motherly love, acceptance and protection."

The Temple had three spaces: the altar of roses, the chamber of the heart and the ring of offerings.

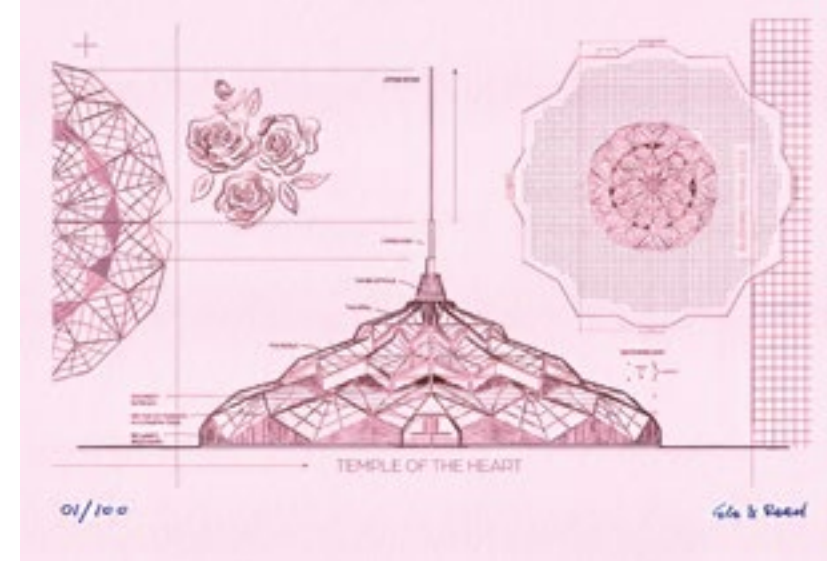
There are also the 'Guardians of the Temple', a group of volunteers who take care of the space day and night.



Throughout the week, many events take place in the Temple: concerts, rituals, gatherings of friends to pay tributes.

It is a place to mourn, to reflect, to remember. For some, it is a place to let loose. The burning of the Temple is one of the most emotional moments of Burning Man, as people come to terms with their own mortality and the impermanence of all things.





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The concept of the Temple this 2023 was of a flower, a rose, resting face down on the ground. Drawing by Ela Madej and Reed Finlay, edition of 100 copies for the people who contributed \$500 to the Kickstarter.

www.temple2023.com



Every year a competition of ideas and proposals to build the Temple is called. It is necessary to have participated in the BM several times and above all to have built something significant, to prove previous experience.

This year the Temple was designed by artist Ela Madej, of Polish origin and resident in San Francisco, and Reed Finlay, architect resident in Los Angeles, with a whole team of artists and volunteers working for a month.

The construction is financed with a small part by the organization, mainly on logistical issues, but most of the resources are obtained with crowdfunding, this year they have obtained \$160,000.



Photo: (cc) Duncan Rawlinson duncan.co/Burning-Man-2023



The Man



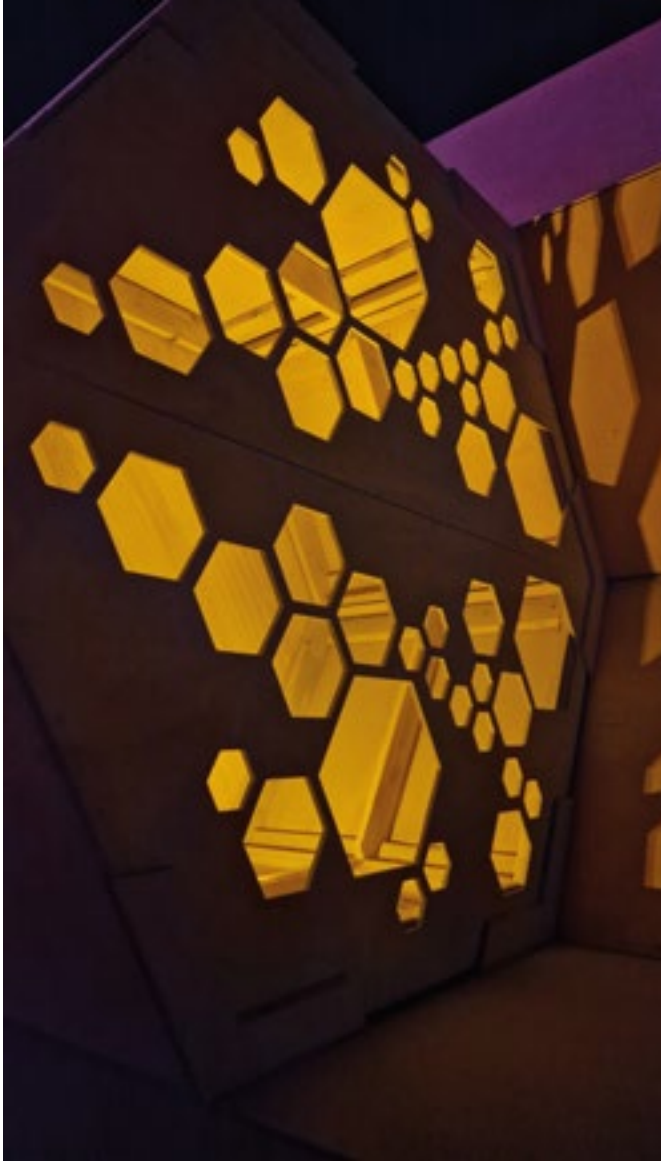






Every year the organizers of Burning Man propose a motto, this year it was ANIMALIA. The main and emblematic installation of the event is the Man, the large human figure that will be located at the center of Black Rock City and will be burned at the end. Every year a competition of ideas is called and one is chosen which the organization will partly finance and around a hundred volunteers will build for a few weeks before the event. Eleven proposals were presented this edition. The chosen one is "The Hive", the beehive, designed by Tim Bremner.

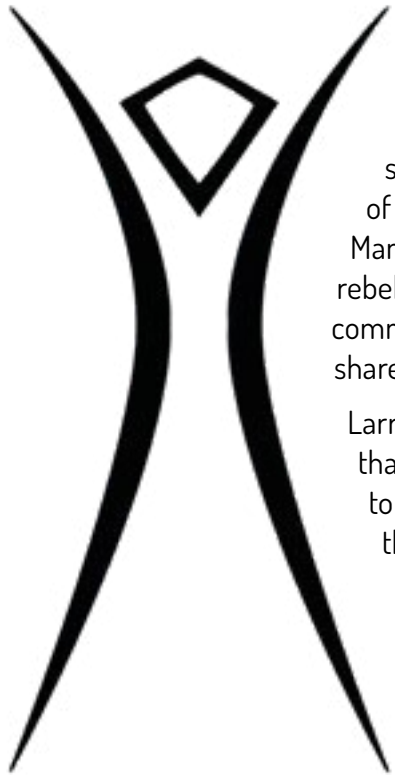
Tim Bremner is a designer, artist and creative director from Oakland who has been going to Black Rock City since 2001. Tim delved into Art Nouveau patterns, for 'Hive Man Base' he designed the whole concept using only two hex sizes to make it simple, yet incredibly complex at the same time.



The different proposals presented by Man for this edition can be seen here:

journal.burningman.org/2023/02/burning-man-arts/brc-art/the-2023-man-pavilion/





The figure of Man at the Burning Man represents several meanings, depending on the interpretation of each participant. According to the founders, the Man symbolizes the ephemeral nature of life, creativity, rebellion and renewal. The Man is also a landmark and community center for event goers, who gather around it to share experiences, art and culture.

Larry Harvey, one of the founders of Burning Man, said that the Man was “a meeting point, a center, a compass to explore the frontier of the unknown”. He also said that the Man was “a metaphor for everything that makes us human and our ability to overcome limits”. Harvey argued that the Man was not a simple sculpture, but a participatory work of art, inviting goers to collaborate, create and share their experiences.



Babel



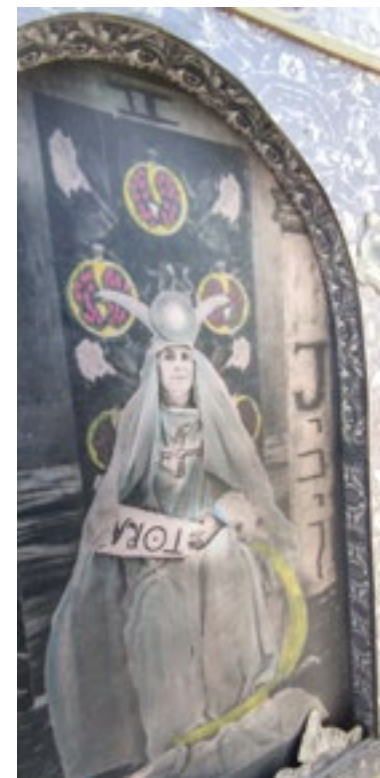
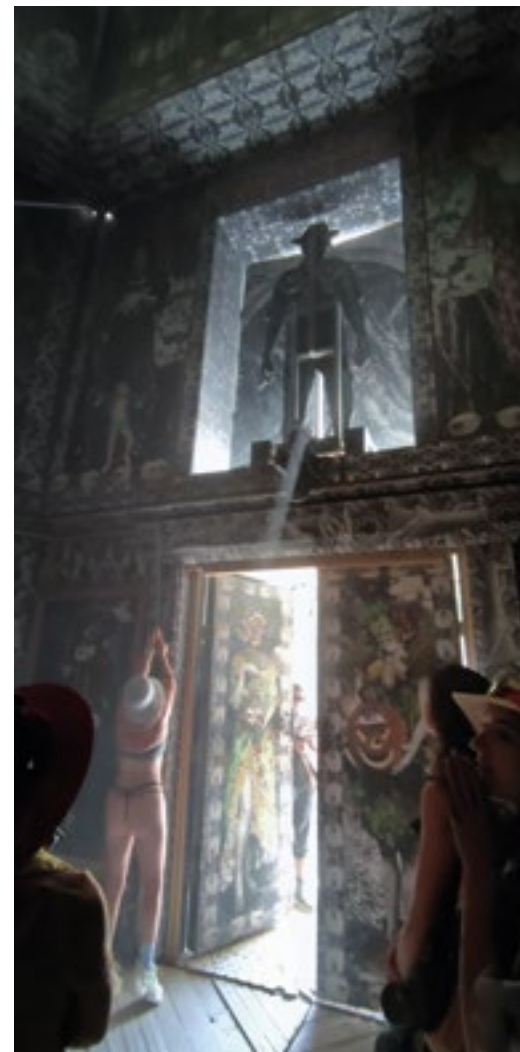


"Chapel of Babel" by Michael Garlington.

It is very difficult to describe what Babel was. A building completely covered in disturbing old photographs. Inside there are labyrinths and sordid spaces, such as a kind of dark 'confessional' next to a large portrait of the artist's father, on the floor the author reads the tarot to some visitors. A chill runs through your body.

michaelgarlington.com/chapel-of-babel



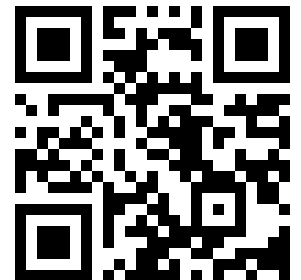




All Burning Man participants who know how to play an instrument can sign up for the Black Rock Philharmonic, an ephemeral orchestra that performs at various BRC locations. They rehearse every day for two hours and do concerts at different points of BRC. On the 1st of September they did a concert in front of Babel, with thousands of attendees. The most emotional piece was the interpretation of Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen, sung by all those present. Behind me the Titanic artcar. Goosebumps and tears in my eyes.

vimeo.com/951305752

blackrockphilharmonic.org







The rains





2nd of September. Against all odds it rained, and it rained for three days. It looks like it has not rained during BM in ages. I was cycling along the Playa and mud started to stick to the tires, it was impossible to move forward, and I had to abandon it. Suddenly that fine dust of the desert turned into a tremendously sticky mud field. It was a strong shock, but not a drama. It was part of the experience.

An emergency meeting was called in the camp and measures were taken: showers are not allowed, water must be saved, we do not know how many days this will last, food is rationed, only one meal a day. Volunteers lay out wooden walkways. Toilet usage is discussed, etc. The camp leaders were in constant contact with the organization by radio and called two meetings a day to report on the situation.



Photo: Richard Downe

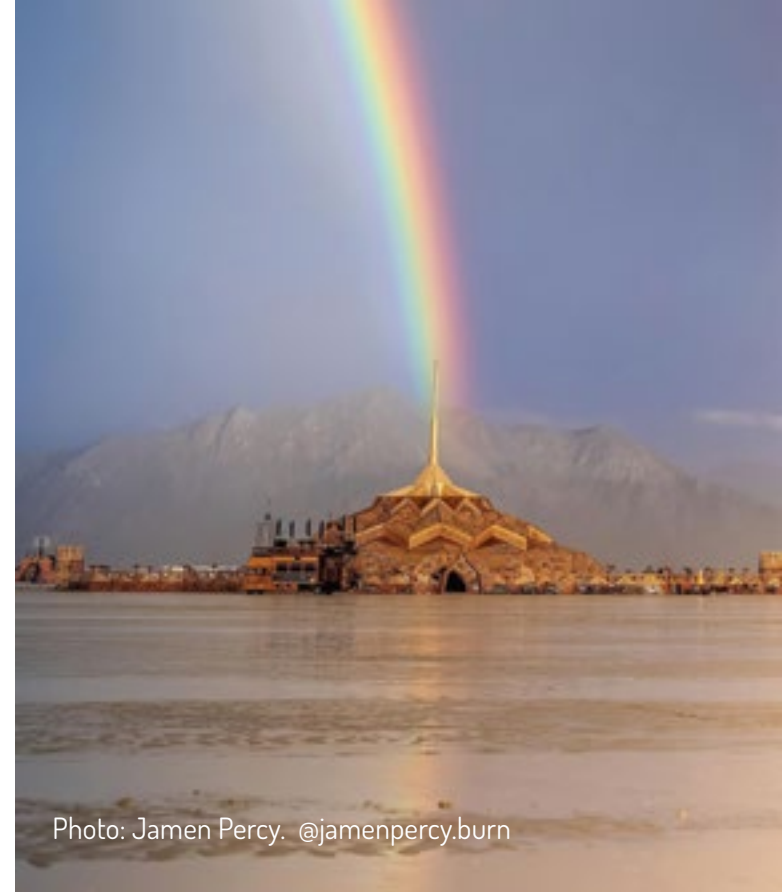


Photo: Jamen Percy. @jamenpercy.burn



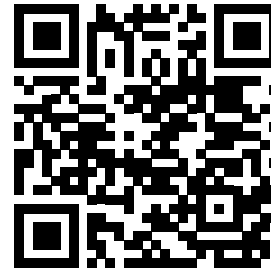
Photo: @Stefano Berio





The burning of the Man was postponed and the worst part was for those who were trapped in vehicles on the 5Km of dirt road at the entrance to BRC, unable to enter or leave.

There was no shortage of music and hugs in our camp. At night, Axo lit a fire, put on music and the party did not stop.



Meanwhile, chaos took over our Shiftpod :-)



Photo: Benjamin Ortega @benjaminortega

Many qualify this impressive image as one of the best ever made at the Burning Man, two semicircles joined together. A magical scene impossible to recreate. It announced the old covenant of heaven and earth at the end of the rains.





The fire



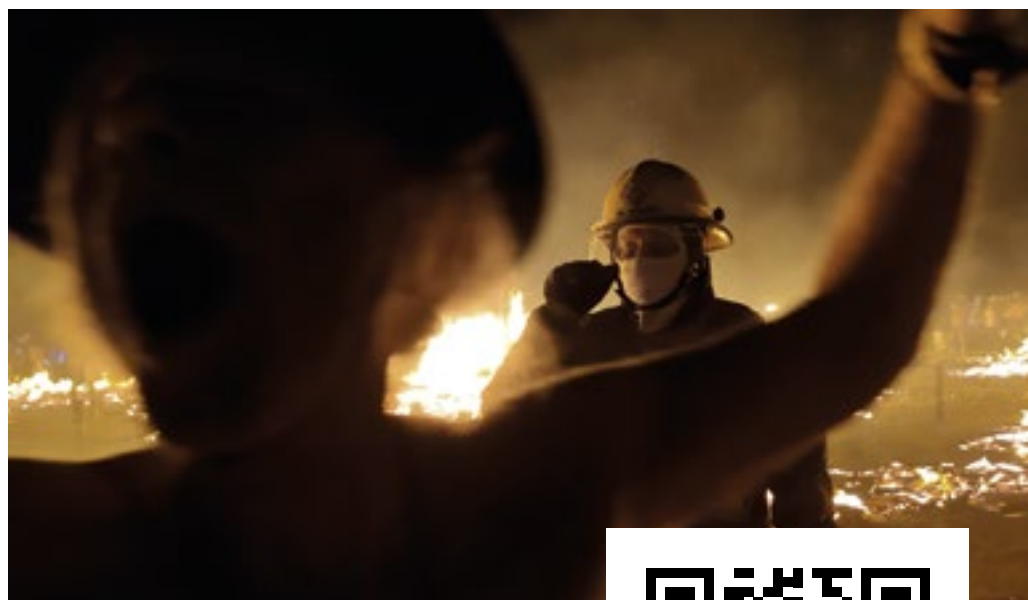


Saturday was the announced day of the burning of the Man, but it was postponed. In our camp during the rains and in the face of the uncertainty of the event, John Geary built a small Man and that night it was burned in a local ceremony. We had to wait two more days for the official Man burn to be announced.

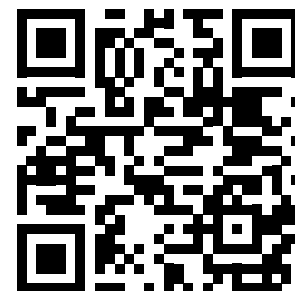


Finally, on September 4th, Monday, two days later than planned, the ground has dried and it is now possible to walk everywhere. It is announced on the radio that the Man will be burned today. All the mutant vehicles create a big circle around, all the spontaneous ones that can do fire also gather and do their little show. Thousands of people begin to gather around the Man, at a safe distance. There are three circles of volunteers and firefighters who make sure no one gets close. The big moment begins.





The Man begins to burn with a large castle of fire followed by large fireballs. After an hour, when the Man has been reduced to a large ember bed, they let people approach. The catharsis arrives and thousands of people begin to turn frantically around the ashes, many of them naked. There are still firefighters watching no one gets too close, but some madmen run through the embers and the fire. A group of people come together spontaneously with all kinds of percussion elements, the rhythm is frenetic. Many will stay all night spinning and dancing. For many the party ends here, but for us there is still a lot to do.



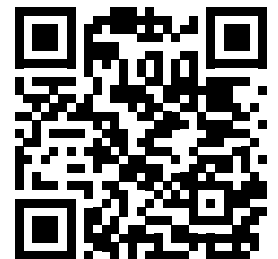


“Chapel of Babel, Between horror and wonder” is the second large installation to burn. Also a large number of people create a large circle. Under the moon and the stars of this clear night, Babel immediately turns into a great pyre. Between the flames appears the profile of Larry Harvey, one of the founders of the BM and author of the 10 principles, who left us in 2018. A tribute.

When Babel is already reduced to a pile of ashes, in the middle of the crowd and with faces ruddy from the fire, a person, in a long white furry coat and a large-brimmed hat, approaches, gives me a bracelet, puts it on my wrist and says: “this is for you, so you remember this moment”. It is the eye of the dragon.



The next day comes the last moment, the last ceremony, the most emotional, the burning of the Temple. Another day, thousands of people gather around, in absolute silence. Very slowly the fire starts. A lot of crying is heard. With the burning of the Temple, so many memories and so many moments of so many people go and disappear...









The strike: dismantling the camp



The day after the burning of Man we started to dismantle the field and the AxoCar. A very laborious part of the job was cleaning all the equipment, tents, walkways, tables, etc. of mud. And above all a very important job, leave no trace. In the last days, people could be seen in all the camps meticulously combing the ground to pick up even the smallest fragment of anything that had fallen unintentionally. When everyone has left the Black Rock Desert, a few hundred volunteers remain and do a last, systematic search and inventory any MOOP found (Mater Out Of Place).



On the last day when we got up we were alone in the camp, everyone had already left. We had a pleasant surprise, someone had left us some boxes with food next to the Shifpod. After so many days of eating crackers and nuts it was a blessing. Even a watermelon! (I do not know where that watermelon came from). And even more, a carafe with "HORCHATA DON JOSE"!!! Amazing! (But it turns out it is a typical Mexican drink made with rice :-)

Before leaving we passed by the camp of Juju and his friends, who were also dismantling the heart factory, and we shared with them the gifts someone had left us. We had our last hugs in this ephemeral utopia paradise.

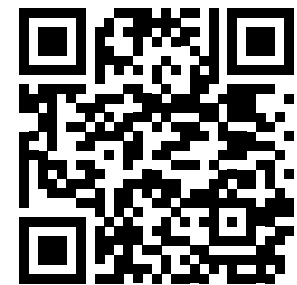




Disassembling the LoopHole







September 6th, the last day. On the platform, under the mud, where hundreds of people had danced, embraced and enjoyed, appeared the drawing of Mother Earth, as if it were an archaeological find, appearing in the middle of an ancestral desert. The drawing, unfinished, ephemeral due to its function, would end up forgotten forever inside wood container in the Generator.





The end of dreams are always nostalgic. We do not want them to ever end. But as the wise say there is a time for everything and a thing for every time. And our time in this dream is over.



The location of the LoopHole, once everything has been meticulously collected. Only a small trace of the inner circle remains, which the desert will erase in a few days. Silence returns to this vast space, but we have an infinite echo in the memory of so many people.





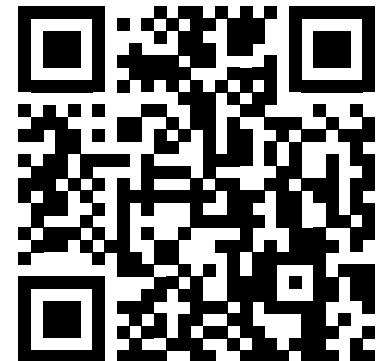
Decompression





A couple of hours from Reno, heading west, we find a paradisaical space. It is Lake Tahoe that is located between Nevada and California. It is an vast lake of about 500 km². Its waters are said to be the most transparent in the world. It is surrounded by exuberant vegetation of pines (*Pinus jeffreyi*), firs (*Abies concolor*) and the enormous sequoias (*Sequoia sempervirens*), the latter are trees that can reach 100m in height and live more than 2,000 years!

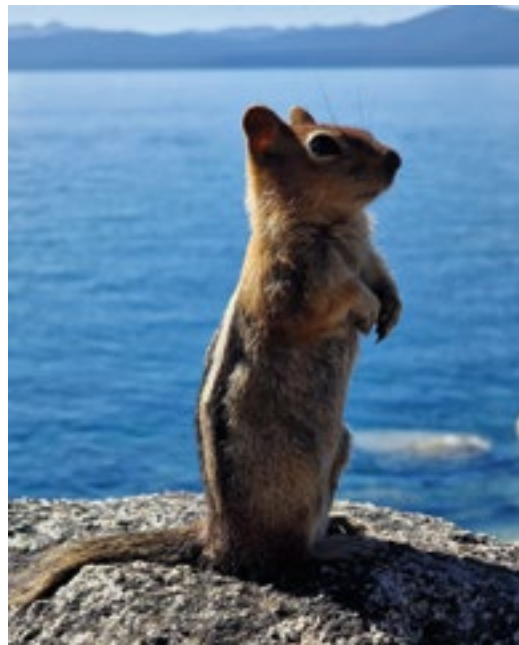
In some corners, small sandy beaches can be accessed by walking for a while along forest paths. These days we do what a lot of 'burners' call 'decompression'. In other words, to 'decompress' so many emotions accumulated during the days of Burning Man. The water is fresh since it is at 1800m high but you can swim for hours alternating the powerful sun on the white sand. The contrast is hard to beat.





A strange warning greets us as we approach the lake: "Optional clothing may be present on the beach below (only)"





A little forest squirrel came to see, it was not afraid of the Burners. But also throughout these forests and throughout the region we have seen many posters warning of the presence of the bear.



This was our last experience that has been engraved with great intensity in our lives. Maybe one day we can go back and share with so many people creativity and the most positive human feelings.





Epilogue

The dream has come true. Participating in Burning Man and being part of its ephemeral city has been like entering a fantasy world, where anything is possible. A world created by thousands of people, artists, creators, lunatics, idealists, utopians, makers, musicians, lone wolves and many other people who believe that it is possible to build, even for a few days, an alternative to conventional reality, where love and creativity are the fundamental values.

Our satisfaction has been twofold: not only have we enjoyed being part of this very special community, but we have had the opportunity to create a piece of art and place it at the center of the event, thus contributing to enrich this collective experience.

This experience has also made us reflect on the longings for happiness, spirituality and transcendence that humans have, what makes us who we are and gives meaning to our lives.

With this book we want to share with you part of the moments we lived, and we hope they inspire and move you as much as they did to us.

Josep, David i Daniel



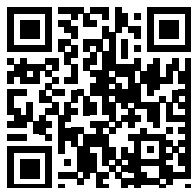


+ More videos to watch:



“Loophole at Burning Man 2023”

vimeo.com/867733851



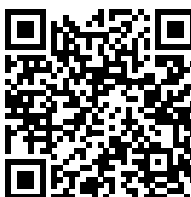
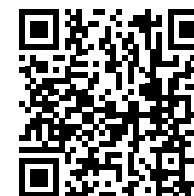
“Burning Man 2019. Cómo construir una utopía en el desierto”.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYtcU1V5Gwg



+ Electronic versions of this book:

www.calidos.cat/loophole/loophole_ang.epub



+ You can download this book in PDF format here:

www.calidos.cat/loophole/loophole_ang.pdf

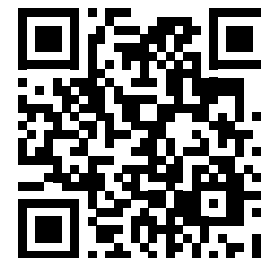


Burning Man Regional Network



The Burning Man Regional Network plays a key role in the year-round extension of the Burning Man experience, supporting it as a global cultural movement. In cities around the world, regional contacts help local Burners connect with each other, while bringing the principles and culture of Burning Man to their local communities through events and activities throughout the year. Find and contact your nearest Regional:

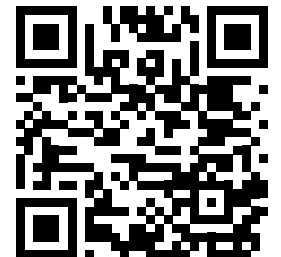
regionals.burningman.org/regionals





You don't have to travel far to live and participate in a similar experience to the BM, there are several regional events in Europe that follow the same philosophy and principles. These 'Burn' events last a week, with thematic camps, workshops, art, all co-created by volunteers and not for profit. In the middle of the Monegros desert every summer, since 2004, the 'NowHere', officially associated with the Burning Man Regional Network, has been celebrated. In July 2023, the LoopHole was installed there with the support of the Bread & Tomato camp.

www.goingnowhere.org/



Video: The LoopHole at NowHere:





This project has been made possible, among others, by donations from:

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Fernanda dos Anjos	Victoria Labadie	
Carles Casteràs Escolà	Sergi Villacampa	









Burning Man is a unique and unique event, a social experiment in an ephemeral city called Black Rock City. In 2023, around 80,000 people gathered, many organized in around 1500 thematic fields. In the center of this utopian city there are more than 300 artistic installations and large-scale sculptural works. There are also mutant vehicles and citizens riding bicycles.

The central symbolic elements are the Man, a large wooden figure, in human form, which symbolizes the ephemeral nature of life, creativity, rebellion and renewal. And the Temple, a great space where people remember and pay tribute to the beings who are no longer with us.

Burning Man is governed by 10 principles: Radical Inclusion, Donation, Decommodification, Radical Self-Sufficiency, Radical Self-Expression, Communal Effort, Civic Responsibility, Leave No Trace, Participation and Immediacy.

The co-created event promotes a culture of collaboration, generosity and creativity that contrasts with the society of consumption and competition that predominates in the outside world.

This book visually describes the experience that some Catalan artists had at the unique event, where they brought the LoopHole light installation. A dream come true.

